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Summary record of the 47th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 11 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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02-28104 (E)

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the follow-up investigation into possible fee-splitting arrangements between defence counsel and indigent detainees at the International Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (A/56/836)

1. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the follow-up investigation into possible fee-splitting arrangements between defence counsel and indigent detainees at the International Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (A/56/836), recalled that an earlier OIOS investigation had found evidence that the legal aid system of both Tribunals had been abused and that some former or current defence counsel had either been solicited or had accepted requests for fee-splitting made to them by their respective clients. He noted with satisfaction that both Tribunals had implemented most of the 16 recommendations contained in the report of OIOS (A/55/579) and had initiated action to implement the remaining recommendations.

2. During its follow-up investigation, conducted between October 2001 and January 2002, OIOS had found evidence that one former defence counsel at the International Tribunal for Rwanda had received but rejected a detainee's request for fee-splitting and had resigned as counsel. There was also evidence that another counsel at the same Tribunal had agreed to a similar request at the time that it was made but had later claimed that the arrangement had not been implemented. Based upon evidence provided by OIOS, the Registrar had determined that the counsel in question had submitted inflated bills to the Tribunal and had therefore discharged him from the case. In consultation with OIOS, the Registrar was also investigating a report from a current counsel that he had declined a request from a client to split fees and had asked the Registrar to withdraw him from the case. OIOS also found evidence that a Tribunal staff member, whose responsibilities included the review of the financial statements submitted by defence team members, had requested and received kick backs (in the form of cash payments and cheques) from several defence team members in order to process their claims in an expeditious manner. The staff member had admitted his corrupt actions.

3. In addition, OIOS had found that one accused person, who had successfully claimed indigence and was represented by a defence team funded by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, had purchased real estate while in detention. Both Tribunals had been provided with draft copies of the report under consideration and their comments and suggestions had been evaluated and incorporated accordingly. In view of the importance of the matter, OIOS would continue to actively pursue it in close consultation with both Registries.

4. **Ms. Nakian** (United States of America) noted with satisfaction that the two Tribunals had implemented most of the recommendations contained in the previous report of OIOS (A/55/759) and had taken additional proactive steps to prevent abuses of the legal aid system established under their respective statutory authorities. Her delegation applauded the Registrar's discharge of a counsel and the decision to communicate that decision to the President of the Law Society of the counsel's State. The new investigative findings revealed in the most recent report, however, were a matter of grave concern and her delegation demanded assurances that prompt action was being taken to rectify both past and ongoing abuses. It was extremely dismayed to learn that the staff member of the International Tribunal for Rwanda, who had admitted his corrupt action, had merely been

reassigned to other duties at the Tribunal. Her delegation was stunned to learn that the individual was still on the payroll and wished to have an explanation of that and any other cases that showed a lack of accountability.

5. At the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, it was a scandal that an accused person, who had successfully claimed indigence and was represented by a defence team funded by the Tribunal, had purchased valuable real estate while in detention. Her delegation supported the recommendation of OIOS that both Tribunals should formulate a working definition of indigence and define "sufficient means" in relation to maximum financial limits on the assets owned by a suspect. It also supported the recommendation that both Tribunals should assign a full-time investigator to investigate claims of indigence, including asset tracing and possible relations between defence team members and the accused person. Both Tribunals were encouraged to make implementation of that recommendation a top priority and to accelerate efforts to revise their Code of Professional Conduct for Defence Counsel to specifically prohibit fee-splitting arrangements and impose sanctions for breaches of the rule.

6. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), replying to the comments made by the representative of the United States of America, said that the staff member who had admitted receiving kick backs had been suspended from duty not reassigned, pending the institution of charges against him.

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (A/56/7/Add.8 and A/C.5/56/25/Add.3)

7. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (A/C.5/56/25/Add.3), said that the estimated requirements for the first 17 political missions relating to matters of which the Security Council was seized amounted to $37,858,600. The requirements for the two additional missions, namely, the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the monitoring mechanism established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1363 (2001), and extended and assigned pursuant to resolution 1390 (2002), amounted to $3,599,900. In its resolution 56/255, the General Assembly had approved a charge of $11,113,400 in partial requirements for the first 17 missions and the balance that was pending approval by the General Assembly amounted to $30,345,100.

8. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's ninth report on estimates in respect of which the Security Council is seized (A/56/7/Add.8), said that, in December 2001, the Advisory Committee had considered three reports of the Secretary-General concerning estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (A/C.5/56/25 and Add.1 and 2) containing proposed resource requirements for 17 special political missions, for which it had recommended partial funding. The Secretariat had submitted its reports rather late and the Advisory Committee had intended to examine in detail the estimates they contained. The Advisory Committee had had a very useful meeting with the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and his senior officials and intended to continue to have such meetings in the future.

9. In its report, the Advisory Committee offered a number of suggestions for improving future reports on special missions and for submitting them much earlier to enable the Advisory Committee to discharge its responsibility. Reports should also contain full justification of requested resources. Moreover, before an office was established, a thorough analysis should be made of the various options available to the Secretary-General with a view to optimizing results and guarding against the possibility of establishing offices that were poorly funded, poorly staffed, stretched to the limit and therefore only minimally effective. As indicated in paragraph 24 of its report and bearing in mind the observations and recommendations contained in the report, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of a charge of $41,458,500, inclusive of the amount of $11,113,400 approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/255.

10. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the Advisory Committee's report contained a number of important recommendations, such as those contained in paragraphs 5 and 6. The recommendation contained in

paragraph 9 was acceptable but raised questions about closer cooperation between the United Nations and other actors in the field. In that connection, he would welcome clarification of how the Advisory Committee interpreted the expression "other actors in the field". He noted in paragraph 13 that the Advisory Committee had requested a clarification of the role of the Department of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations and Management in the administration of funds for special political missions and would welcome an explanation from the Secretariat of why no response had been provided thus far. He would also welcome clarification of the Advisory Committee's intention in paragraph 17 of its report, in which some of the Committee's substantive comments on requested resources were not set out in bold type. Lastly, he wondered why most of the special political missions were headquartered in New York instead of in the field.

11. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to the question raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning paragraph 13 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/7/Add.8), said that, in order to avoid duplication and enhance coordination, one department often provided logistical and administrative services in the field on behalf of another. With regard to the headquarters of special political missions, most but not all such missions were field-based. Because of the nature of their activities, however, one or two of them were authorized by the Security Council to be headquartered in New York.

12. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), also replying to questions posed by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, said, with reference to the recommendation contained in paragraph 9 of the report, that the Advisory Committee did not mean to suggest that the political reporting mandate of missions should be outsourced. There were certain functions, however, such as payroll processing and recruitment, where the facilities of other agencies of the United Nations system in the mission area might be used. By "other actors in the field", the Advisory Committee meant funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations.

13. With reference to paragraph 17, the Advisory Committee could not question the mandate of a mission authorized by the Security Council. The Secretary-General, however, must clearly indicate the nature of the mandate for which he was requesting resources. The Advisory Committee had found that a great deal of information was provided to assist the Security Council in determining the mandate of the mission, but relatively little information was provided in support of the Secretary-General's request for funds.

14. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) asked what was the ratio of support/logistic personnel to substantive personnel in missions. The implication of paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report was that the cost of the logistics and support component of missions was too high and he wondered whether the Advisory Committee could propose any ways in which the amount could be reduced.

15. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that reports of the Secretary-General should contain a much clearer statement of the exact mandate of missions as authorized by the Security Council. He did not, however, question the nature of the mandate of special political missions authorized by the Council. On the question of special political missions headquartered in New York, it would be helpful if the Secretariat could provide additional information about the specific nature of such missions.

16. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the question raised by the representative of the United States, said that the Advisory Committee recognized that by their very nature small missions had high administrative costs and that reductions in those costs were not always possible. He cited the example of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in the Central African Republic, whose total estimated requirements for 2002 were $4,628,500, even though estimates for substantive programmes totalled only $463,300. While the Advisory Committee did not recommend a reduction in the amounts requested, it recalled its recommendation that the establishment of new missions should be accompanied by an analysis of whether the establishment of the mission was the best option under the circumstances and by a review of the various options available to the Secretary-General.

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/56/660, A/56/688 and A/56/845)

17. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) introduced the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Budget for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002" (A/56/660). The budget of $537 million, submitted to the General Assembly in November 2001, had been based on an authorized strength of 5,537 military personnel, including 1,710 civilian personnel. It covered the requirements for phase II of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). At a recent meeting, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) had been informed that the revised estimates could be reduced to $533.88 million. Since the amount currently appropriated for MONUC was $393.23 million, the General Assembly should appropriate an additional $140.65 million.

18. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the report of the Advisory Committee entitled "Proposed budget of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (A/56/845). The Advisory Committee would examine the estimates for the period starting 1 July 2002 and report to the Fifth Committee at the second part of the Assembly's resumed session. It recommended an appropriation of $450 million for MONUC, including the amount already appropriated by the General Assembly. Considering the stage reached by the various elements of the peace process, the Advisory Committee was aware that the full resources requested were unlikely to be required during the final six months of the current financial period. Indeed, under-expenditures traditionally arose during the first or second formative financial periods of peacekeeping missions. Approximately $250 million would be reported as under-expenditure for the period ending 30 June 2001.

19. The issue of contractual services for the air operations of MONUC merited the urgent and proactive attention of the Fifth Committee. The report offered various options for remedying the situation when the term of the current contract ended on 30 June 2002.

20. **Mr. Soto Gúrpide** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, welcomed the report of the Advisory Committee on the proposed budget of MONUC, but expressed concern at its late submission. The late submission of budget reports for peacekeeping operations was a recurring problem which the Secretariat should address without delay.

21. The European Union and associated countries strongly supported the Secretary-General's efforts to bring lasting peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and recognized that the tasks assigned to the United Nations under the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement required careful preparation and financial support. They also recognized the particular constraints affecting MONUC, in addition to the difficulties inherent in producing a budget for any such mission. While it was essential for MONUC to be adequately financed, the Advisory Committee had rightly observed that there was much to criticize in the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/660).

22. Clear narratives were important to enable Member States to take the right budgetary decisions. The European Union and associated countries supported the Advisory Committee's comments on that issue, particularly with regard to the administrative component of MONUC. They also accepted the Advisory Committee's recommendation not to reduce post levels, even though the justification provided for most new posts was inadequate. The Secretariat should make every effort to rectify those shortcomings in its next budget document.

23. The mismanagement in the award of the air service contract to Pacific Architects and Engineers Inc. PAE/Daher was a matter of great concern. If the information contained in the Advisory Committee's report was confirmed, a full explanation would be required, including the reason for choosing a company which had not produced the lowest bid. The information requested by the Advisory Committee should be provided immediately, rather than in the next budget document. Similar problems had arisen in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and ways of protecting the Organization from such mismanagement and the resulting costs should therefore be explored.

24. Lastly, the report of the Advisory Committee had revealed a number of areas in which improvements were still urgently needed, including the timely signing of memorandums of understanding, the verification of contingent-owned equipment, and the issue of gender mainstreaming. The European Union and associated countries would be pursuing those and other matters during the second part of the Assembly's resumed session. He wished to know whether the figure of $450 million mentioned in the Advisory Committee's report for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 was a gross figure and, if so, what the net amount would be.

25. **Mr. Agyeman** (Ghana), stressing the seriousness of the political and security challenges confronting MONUC, said that it was his delegation's hope that the Assembly would meet the Mission's operational needs, thereby empowering it to effectively assist in restoring peace and stability to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The country's population might then devote its energies to nation-building.

26. The Mission's failure to comply with outsourcing policies and procurement procedures in awarding the air service contract was a matter of serious concern. Such a gross dissipation of resources was particularly regrettable at a time when the international community was calling for more resources to enable the United Nations to play an effective and efficient role. His delegation could not accept the explanation of "operational necessity", considering that more than nine months had elapsed from the time that the Field Administration and Logistics Division had indicated the need for the contract and the initiation of firm action by the Procurement Division. It also failed to understand the exigencies of the circumstances, given that a much lower bid of $24.5 million had been ignored in favour of an inappropriately high bid of $34 million. In the given case, the requirement of economy would surely have coincided with the need for effectiveness and efficiency.

27. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the current contract term should not be renewed and that a comprehensive review of the entire contract for airfield services should be conducted. The Board of Auditors, for its part, should ensure that such lapses were not a systemic concern for other peacekeeping missions. His delegation was currently assessing the recommendation that airfield contracts should be awarded to more than one provider.

28. Given the lack of focus in the programme narratives of the budget proposals, his delegation would welcome the use of a results-based budgeting format.

29. The fact that such a sizeable air service contract had not been mentioned in the list of contract services called into question the integrity of documents submitted for consideration. It was also a matter of concern that the Advisory Committee had not received the information on service contracts that it had requested.

30. While recognizing the administrative and logistical challenges facing MONUC, his delegation agreed that the proposed level of support services appeared excessive. It also supported the need for clear linkages between requested posts and workload indicators. To ensure that mission resources were effectively deployed, MONUC should be encouraged to implement the Advisory Committee's recommendations on cost-saving measures.

31. The inter-Congolese dialogue had the potential to provide a firm basis for the deployment of phase III of the Mission in the country's eastern region. Adequate resources should also be allocated for the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Programme (DDR) His delegation could also endorse the additional $56.76 million for MONUC for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002.

32. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he was shocked that the report before the Committee had not been introduced by a representative of the Secretary-General. Summary records from previous sessions confirmed that reports on peacekeeping missions had in the past been introduced by a representative of the Secretary-General. He intended to raise the issue again at a later stage.

33. **The Chairman** said that he had given the floor to the Controller to introduce the report of the Secretary-General before giving the floor to the representative of the Advisory Committee.

34. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it was the first time that a report of the Advisory Committee on the financing of a peacekeeping mission had come to the attention of his delegation. Given that it raised important questions concerning, inter alia, the preparation of budget documents, the clarity of

recommendations and the structure of the Mission, he had expected an official reply from a representative of the Secretary-General. His delegation was merely concerned to ensure the success of the Mission.

35. **The Chairman** said that, as with other items, there would be an opportunity to continue the general discussion during informal consultations. Relevant Secretariat officials would be available in due course to reply to any questions.

36. **Mr. Kelapile** (Botswana) said that the Mission should be provided with funding on a timely, predictable basis, pursuant to the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The financial and administrative arrangements of all peacekeeping missions must also be given equal treatment. Given the importance of the inter-Congolese dialogue, the efforts to strengthen the office of the neutral facilitator were particularly welcome, since adequate preparedness and reliable resources were required to ensure effective implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

37. He was encouraged by the European Union's recent declaration of commitment to MONUC, in particular its pledge to advocate adequate financial resources for the Mission during the current review of its budget.

38. His delegation supported most of the recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee's report, including the importance of improving the format of future budget documents and providing clear justification of posts and other resource requirements. It also noted the Advisory Committee's intention to provide additional comments in its comprehensive report on peacekeeping and looked forward to receiving clarification on a number of matters, especially those relating to quick impact projects and gender issues.

39. Neither the complexity nor the desperate nature of the country's situation could justify the contravention of due process in procurement practices and the award of air service contracts. Such irregularities could result in significant financial losses to the Organization.

40. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation concurred with the comments made by the representatives of Spain and Ghana and shared the concerns expressed by several speakers about the Mission's administrative component. Given the difficulty of implementing the Lusaka Agreement, it was particularly important to ensure that MONUC was well organized. Considering the crucial role of the inter-Congolese dialogue, it was also important to ensure that personnel were effectively and efficiently deployed. The poor justification for new posts was thus a matter of concern, as was the reported mismanagement of the air service contract. He trusted that additional explanations would be provided in due course.

41. With regard to the Mission's budget, a results-based budgeting format would certainly be preferable. Having advocated the expansion of MONUC in the Security Council, his delegation supported the $450 million recommended by the Advisory Committee.

42. He hoped that the Mission would soon be forthcoming with information on the number of foreign troops and armed militias on the ground. MONUC should also propose effective measures for the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Programme, which would prove critical in the subsequent phase of the budget.

43. **Mr. Kandanga** (Namibia) stressed the importance of adequate justification of resources, which should be commensurate with the needs of the Mission. The proposed gender and child protection units must be assured appropriate staffing levels to ensure the effective coordination of mandates. The office of the neutral facilitator was crucial to the peace process and should thus also be allocated appropriate resources.

44. The mismanagement of the air service contract was indeed a matter of great concern, which was why various solutions, including a resubmission to tender at the end of the first year, should be considered.

45. **Mr. Soto Gurpide** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, noted a slight contradiction between the English and Spanish versions of the Advisory Committee's report, (A/56/845) and said that the Spanish text should prevail.

46. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that his delegation saw three sets of issues to be addressed: format and presentation, justification of posts and procurement. The Advisory Committee's recommendations provided a way forward and would enhance transparency. In that connection, it would be useful to know what

implications the $85 million reduction in the budget would have on its implementation.

47. **Mr. Fox** (Australia) requested clarification of the background of the decision to reverse the reduction in mission subsistence allowance and whether that was an issue in other missions.

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 *(continued)*

Budget constraints and support service reductions (continued)

48. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), in reply to the statement by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China made at the Committee's forty-fourth meeting, said that recent reductions in services were not in contravention of General Assembly resolution 56/254, but in compliance with it. It was the responsibility of the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to administer the budget adopted by the General Assembly; otherwise he would be derelict in his duty. The budget as adopted was $75 million lower than the requested level, but no programme cutbacks or reductions in posts had been approved. Since the resolution was very clear about where the cuts should be applied and reaffirmed that the vacancy rate should not be used, there was no room left to manoeuvre. The Secretariat had three choices in implementing the budget: to increase productivity, reduce services or overspend the budget. The third choice was not an option; the productivity increases which had been achieved over the previous three bienniums were not likely in the current biennium because of the cuts in expenditure for information technology, which had been the main source of the increased productivity. Thus, the Secretariat was left with no choice but to reduce services. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had said that it did not appear possible to continue to do more with less, and it should not be surprising if it was not possible to accomplish all the activities contained in the budget.

49. **Mr. Alcalay** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed the deep concern of its members over whether they would be able to fulfil their commitments to their people in the current climate of service reductions. The Group also recognized the concerns of the Secretary-General over his ability to carry out important programmes for the same reasons, and was prepared to hold informal consultations on the subject to find a constructive way to deal with the situation.

50. The concerns at reductions in support services, which affected smaller Missions most severely, should be brought to the attention of the General Assembly, as the body which had approved the programme budget. He was hopeful that a harmonious and practical solution could be found in the informal consultations.

51. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. It would like from the Secretariat a comparison of the resources allocated under each budget section for the bienniums 2000-2001 and 2002-2003 and the specific amounts that had been cut from the budget of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services (DGAACS). Member States would be directly affected by the cuts and he wondered why the representatives of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, who had been present at the consultations, had failed to call attention to their impact.

52. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) pointed out that the budget had been adopted by consensus, and that it actually represented a 3.5 per cent increase over the previous biennium. Efforts should focus on the best way to allocate resources and on the possibility of shifting funds to high-priority activities. As it was still early in the 24-month budget period, in a spirit of harmony, it should be possible to find a way to meet the needs of all within the budget parameters.

53. **Ms. Marston** (Jamaica) said that her delegation was particularly concerned at the effects of cuts in information technology services to Permanent Missions. It would like to receive information on the exact amount budgeted for information technology services to Missions, the number of staff members providing those services, whether any had been terminated, and whether there were any alternatives to the 24-hour services provided by outside contractors.

54. **Mr. Elgammal** (Egypt) said that his delegation shared the concerns regarding services provided to Missions and would like information about plans for the redeployment of human resources. While the information circular (ST/IC/2002/13) had indicated that pitcher water supply, elevator operator and coat attendant services would be cut, those services were still being provided. Therefore, he requested

clarification of which cuts had actually been implemented and which remained to be implemented.

55. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that the Secretariat shared the concerns expressed over how to live within the approved budget and deliver services. The Committee had devoted 14 formal meetings to the budget and had submitted 490 written requests for information to the Secretariat, which had provided 563 pages of information. The Committee's report (A/56/736) on the programme budget contained 18 pages of information on the cuts, which indicated that the Committee had been aware of the implications of its actions. More information on the information technology area would be provided in the informal consultations. No staff positions had been cut, but there had been a 15 per cent cut in contractual services and a 38 per cent cut in furniture and equipment. Regrettably, the resources were no longer available to do business as usual.

56. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that reductions could be effected in different ways and that, although the Secretariat had provided a great deal of information to Member States during the budget negotiations, it had not made clear at that time the specific reductions that would be necessary in every area of the budget. Referring to the comments made by the representative of the United States, he said that, as the budget had increased in nominal terms, it was all the more difficult to accept cuts in services that had been covered under the previous budget. Moreover, his delegation had made clear in the budget negotiations that it attached great importance to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. He was concerned that the cuts seemed to have a disproportionate impact on that Department and would like to compare the amounts allocated to it in the current and previous budgets because, to his knowledge, they were approximately the same. With regard to the withdrawal of services for night and weekend meetings, Member States would prefer not to hold meetings at such times, but circumstances sometimes forced them to do so.

Other matters

57. **Mr. Martella** (Assistant Chief of the Security and Safety Service), responding to concerns raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic at the Committee's previous meeting, said that the meeting to which the representative had been unable to gain access had been a special event to mark International Women's Day. The event had been heavily oversubscribed and, in the interests of safety, access had been restricted to specific groups and individuals. Moreover, so many people had been refused entry to the conference room that the corridors around it had also become congested. The United Nations Security and Safety Service alone controlled access to all rooms in the building and no security officers from outside the Organization had been present at the event in question. However, in accordance with the usual practice, some non-uniformed officers had been on duty.

58. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that United Nations security officers usually wore an easily identifiable uniform. On the occasion in question, however, some officers had been wearing a different uniform. He would therefore like to know whether the standard uniform had changed.

59. **Mr. Martella** (Assistant Chief of the Security and Safety Service) said that there were always some non-uniformed officers among the security staff at any event; they were used particularly to provide personal protection. Many high-profile figures had attended the International Women's Day event and a large number of non-uniformed officers had therefore been on duty. The two officers in charge of the security operation had served with the Organization for more than 20 years and were confident that all the officers on duty that day had identified themselves as United Nations security staff.

60. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the security officers had not identified themselves to him as United Nations security staff. While he had not been aware of the high-level nature of the event, he found it difficult to believe that more stringent security measures had been necessary than at other events attended by important figures, including Heads of State and Government. Given the large number of people wishing to attend, the event should have been held in a bigger room; representatives of Member States had been denied access without prior warning. Because of the congestion in the corridor, he had been forced to use a different door to enter the room in which the Committee had been meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

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Summary record of the 48th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 12 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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02-28227 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 123: Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (*continued*) (A/56/7/Add.8, A/C.5/56/25/Add.3)

1. **The Chairman** said that, in the absence of any further comments, he would take it that the Committee had concluded its general discussion on the issue.

2. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*continued*) (A/56/660, A/56/688 and A/56/845)

3. **Mr. Loedel** (Uruguay) said that his Government attached particular importance to agenda item 158 and was demonstrating its commitment to peace in the region by its significant participation in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC); it currently had 1,062 troops assigned to the Mission, and had signed five of the current memorandums of understanding.

4. Although the report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/845) had been issued late, it provided important clarification in analysing a confusing budget document. Uruguay supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations and could endorse the proposed additional appropriation for MONUC of $56,757,600.

5. The lack of transparency and irregularities in the procurement system were confirmed once again by the award of the air service contract to Pacific Architects and Engineers Inc. (PAE)/Daher International Transport. There was also a lack of clarity in the procurement process for water treatment plants. The process required further major adjustments and appropriate monitoring.

6. Uruguay fully endorsed the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraph 21 of its report (A/56/845) and the decision of MONUC to expedite installation of water treatment plants in locations of contingent and other MONUC operation centres as a means of reducing water procurement and transportation costs.

7. With regard to paragraph 23, his delegation hoped that in reviewing the mission subsistence rates, the Office of Human Resources Management would take into account the significant cost variations in different parts of the region.

8. His delegation was concerned about the financial implications of the proposal to deploy 147 of the 170 United Nations Volunteers to the administrative component of MONUC and about the relevance of that proposal in such areas as transport, communications and medical services, which were normally covered by the contingents.

9. In general, the Advisory Committee's recommendations should be the guide in ensuring adequate resources for MONUC and enabling the Mission it to carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Security Council.

10. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) drew attention to the apparently insoluble problem of the late issuance of documents, which had adverse consequences for delegations.

11. His Government fully supported MONUC and the efforts of the Secretary-General to restore peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The tasks entrusted to MONUC were multiple, varied and crucial to the return of stability in that country and the Mission should therefore have the necessary financial and human resources to carry out its mandate.

12. His delegation noted certain gaps in the justification for some of the new posts requested by the Mission, but was aware of the urgent need for them. The Secretariat, however, should take into account the Advisory Committee's recommendations in that regard in its next budget presentation and rectify the errors and omissions in the budget document noted by the Advisory Committee. His delegation was concerned about the information contained in paragraphs 84 to 99 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/845) and would welcome clarification from the Secretariat.

13. **Mr. Mumbey-Wafula** (Uganda) said that his delegation attached great importance to the Organization's efforts to resolve the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by making MONUC fully operational. However, the level of resources committed to MONUC was too low and implementation of phase III needed to be accelerated through increased involvement of MONUC in

promoting national dialogue and quicker implementation of the programme of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reinsertion of armed groups. Regrettably, MONUC did not have sufficient human and financial resources to take over the positions currently held by Uganda in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Member States should address that problem urgently, so that Ugandan troops could withdraw. Given the magnitude of the task assigned to MONUC, it was surprising that the Secretariat had been unable to justify some of its requests for posts. The Secretariat should clarify the difficulties it had faced in that regard. His delegation supported measures for the efficient and effective use of resources and therefore agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the air service contract should be reviewed.

14. The slow pace of response to crisis situations in Africa was a matter of concern and Member States should take the necessary action to reverse that pattern. Enhanced participation by MONUC in implementing the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement would go a long way towards restoring peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

15. **Mr. Chandra** (India) echoed the concerns expressed by other delegations about the format and presentation of the budget for MONUC contained in document A/56/660. He looked forward to receiving answers to previous questions about the $34 million air service contract and the implications of the budget reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee. His delegation would raise the issue of the mission subsistence allowance in informal consultations, including its link with operational effectiveness in peacekeeping missions.

16. **Mr. Sheehan** (Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Logistics, Management and Mine Action Service) said he shared the Committee's concerns about the air service contract; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was taking firm action to deal with the problems noted. Two new senior staff members, who had been appointed to the Department in 2002, were reviewing all aspects of the contract in coordination with the Department of Management and MONUC. The relevant experts would provide the Committee with more detailed information on contractual matters.

17. MONUC was not only the largest and most complex logistical operation ever undertaken by the United Nations but it had also been mounted without the participation of military units from developed countries, in contrast to all the other large peacekeeping operations. One of the initial aims of MONUC had been to station large units throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo to provide protection for observers. In addition, a massive airlifting operation had been undertaken to distribute huge quantities of fuel across the country, since air transport was the only feasible means of distribution in a country whose infrastructure had been completely destroyed by years of war and neglect.

18. While aviation standards in the MONUC area were far lower than those in the best international airports, they were higher than those of the most basic "bush" aviation, which were characterized by a total lack of communications, air traffic control and security and safety procedures. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continuously strove to upgrade safety standards, but a degree of risk was always involved in peacekeeping operations, because deployment could not be postponed until international standards were reached. The Department's primary concern was the safety of its staff, even though that sometimes led to disputes with the contractors who provided air transport services.

19. In East Timor, the Australian army had initially taken the lead role in setting up a professional air operation. The Australian Government had then agreed to maintain the operation until the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) had been fully established. UNTAET had replaced the Australian operation with a number of contractual arrangements, which were now on the whole functioning smoothly. There was still some risk involved in flying in and out of the mission area, but safety standards were generally good. In contrast, MONUC faced huge difficulties. For example, the airport at Kindu, some 1,500 miles from the capital, consisted of a strip of asphalt controlled by an army faction. MONUC planned to land huge quantities of jet fuel there in the coming months — a highly hazardous operation which was complicated by the army's unwillingness to cooperate.

20. MONUC was obliged to use contractual services because it would take too long to recruit staff through the traditional method of placing vacancy

announcements. Moreover, though it would be preferable to have an army from Member States, no State had volunteered to provide such support, apart from South Africa, whose contribution was not sufficient to cover every need. Before the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the Brahimi report) had been issued, the Department of Management had been responsible for all contracts. However, there was now a small unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations responsible for managing the procurement process in conjunction with the Department of Management. He understood the concerns expressed about the use of contractual services. However, MONUC's safety standards were currently the worst of all the Organization's peacekeeping operations and if the Missions did not use contractual services, it would remain a "bush" operation. Furthermore, while MONUC staff welcomed oversight, he was concerned that their ability to take effective decisions would be paralysed if their integrity was continually called into question.

21. **Mr. Toh** (Officer-in-Charge, Procurement Division) said that he and his staff had reviewed the process by which the air service contract had been awarded and he personally was satisfied that the established procurement rules had been respected. The process had been thorough and had taken several months to finalize.

22. **Ms. Pollard** (Deputy Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division), responding to questions raised by Committee members, said that the budget of $450 million recommended for MONUC in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/845) was a gross figure; the net equivalent was $442,773,800. With reference to paragraph 75 of the report, the air service contract had been provided for under the air operations section of the budget rather than the contractual services section. A reply to the question regarding the adequacy of the $450 million budget proposal would be provided in informal consultations.

23. **Mr. Chandra** (India), referring to paragraph 89 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/845), noted that his question about the errors in the information provided to the Advisory Committee had not been answered. However, he would be happy for an answer to be given in informal consultations.

24. **Mr. Toh** (Officer-in-Charge, Procurement Division) emphasized that the procurement rules referred to the awarding of contracts to the lowest technically compliant bidder. Bids that did not comply with the relevant requirements were not considered. After extensive discussions, the air service contract had been awarded to PAE/Daher, which had submitted the lowest technically compliant bid. While he understood the concerns that had been raised about the inconsistencies, it was particularly difficult to accurately anticipate requirements in new missions. Contracts therefore needed to be flexible so that changes in requirements could be accommodated. He was satisfied that the PAE/Daher contract fulfilled that criterion.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.49

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

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11 April 2002

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 49th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 13 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 129: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*)

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Management

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Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

02-28387 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 129: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*)

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Management

1. **Mr. Connor** (Under-Secretary-General for Management),* presenting an end-of-year review of the financial situation of the Organization, said that the overall situation was better, both by way of liquidity and of flexibility. Even though the United Nations had finally been able to begin to put its financial house in order in 2001, new challenges had emerged which could have an impact during 2002, particularly the challenge to operate within a reduced regular budget appropriation in real terms.

2. Accomplishments in the managerial and administrative arena included an enhanced staff security plan; design work for the comprehensive plan to renovate the Headquarters complex; the roll-out of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) to all duty stations; increased responsibility and accountability of programme managers for personnel matters; and a commitment of resources to the support plan for peacekeeping operations. None of those activities could be sustained, however, without an adequate financial base defined in terms of cash on hand, the level of unpaid assessments and debt owed to Member States.

3. In 2001, all three components of the financial base had improved over 2000, continuing the steady progress achieved over the previous six years. Total combined cash at the end of 2001 was $1,326 million, up 32 per cent over 2000. Unpaid assessments were 7 per cent lower at $2,106 million and amounts due to Member States for troops and contingent-owned equipment were down to $748 million, a drop of 18 per cent from 2000.

4. Payment of assessments long in arrears had brought about changes in all three indicators. United States of America had paid a total of $1,669 million in contributions in 2001. Payments from other Member States amounted to $2,796 million, somewhat short of the projected amount of $3,050 million, as peacekeeping payments had fallen short of current assessments. In any case, total receipts of $4,437 million from all Member States represented the highest level of contributions received in any one year in the Organization's history.

5. As a result of those payments, aggregate cash at the end of 2001 amounted to a very high $1,326 million. Peacekeeping cash totalled $1,315 million, cash in the tribunal accounts $9 million and regular budget cash, including related reserves, aggregated $2 million. Thus, the only significant cash available was in peacekeeping operations. Both regular budget and tribunal cash were very close to zero, an important concern.

6. While the year-end figure for regular budget cash was positive, the monthly cash-flow variations had followed the usual discouraging pattern of recent years. High levels of payments from Member States had been received in January, February and March, declining levels from April to July, and some payments in August and October. That pattern had led to periodic cash deficits in regular budget cash towards the end of the year and cross-borrowing from peacekeeping operations had been necessary to maintain ongoing regular budget operations. Unfortunately, recurring cash deficits in the last months of each year had become a chronic situation for the regular budget and would be eliminated only when all Member States paid their regular budget assessments when they were due, normally by 31 January of each year.

7. If progress towards financial stability was to continue, not only must Member States pay on time, but they must also pay in full. The number of Member States that paid their regular budget assessment in full had increased steadily to 141 in 2000, but had dropped to 135 in 2001. The Secretary-General wished to thank those States that had continued to pay in full for their commitment to meeting their obligations. He hoped that the decrease of 2001 would be temporary and that Member States would improve on the positive trend of recent years. In that connection, the number of States paying their regular budget assessments in full by 31 January 2002 had been 42, an increase from 39 in the prior year period.

8. The cash situation for the two international tribunals was not encouraging. The year-end cash balance was $9 million, a small amount for activities which together cost almost $200 million per year and

* The full text of this statement will be issued as document A/56/464/Add.1.

had a staff of over 1,800. Those low cash balances were a particular concern as disbursements for salary and travel obligations could not be deferred and any negative cash flow position must therefore be countered through borrowing. In fact, limited cross-borrowing between the tribunals had occurred, but at current low levels of cash, other sources of cross-borrowing might need to be identified.

9. As for peacekeeping cash, 2001 peacekeeping assessments of just over $3 billion had almost reached the high levels of 1994 and 1995. The cash balance of $908 million had remained about the same throughout the year. However, with arrears payments of $475 million from the United States and $43 million from the Russian Federation, cash levels had spiked to $1.9 billion at the end of November. Reimbursements to Member States and the usual disbursements for yearly obligations had brought the year-end balance to $1.3 billion. Thus, while the significant inflow of cash received from Member States had led to a year-end aggregate cash balance that was the highest ever, the chronic deficit in the regular budget remained unresolved and the need for continued cross-borrowing relative to the tribunals was foreseen.

10. The second indicator of the Organization's financial health was the level of unpaid assessments. That level was only marginally lower at the end of 2001 and the overall high level of unpaid assessments therefore remained a concern. For the regular budget, outstanding amounts at year-end had changed very little from the previous two years. The United States, Brazil and Argentina together owed 85 per cent of all unpaid regular budget assessments. The United States owed 69 per cent, Brazil 9 per cent and Argentina 7 per cent. The remaining 15 per cent was owed by 51 other Member States.

11. As for peacekeeping assessments, the amount unpaid at 31 December 2001 aggregated $1,823 million, a decrease of $166 million from the previous year. Changes in the position of the United States and the Russian Federation had largely accounted for that decrease. He was pleased to note that the Russian Federation had completed its plan to pay all of its peacekeeping arrears. However, an aggregate increase in peacekeeping arrears of $334 million for other Member States had partially offset those significant payments. For the tribunals, 81 per cent of the $44 million in unpaid assessments was due from the United States (33 per cent), the Russian Federation (32 per cent) and Brazil (16 per cent). A total of 110 other Member States together owed the remaining 19 per cent.

12. The final indicator, but a particularly crucial one for the Organization's financial health, was the debt it owed to Member States. During 2001, it had been possible to make a considerable reduction in the usually intractable aggregate level of debt. As a matter of policy, the Secretary-General had paid to Member States any amounts received from the collection of assessments long in arrears. At year-end, the Organization had been current on all certified claims pending in accounts payable, except for three peacekeeping operations, where cash continued to be unavailable to make payments. It had also been possible to reduce debt for troops and contingent-owned equipment to $748 million at the end of 2001. While the aggregate level of debt had been substantially reduced, continuing efforts were needed to collect unpaid assessments long in arrears.

13. New challenges lay ahead, however, beginning with the level of real resources budgeted for the Organization for 2002-2003. While the budget for 2000-2001 included an increase of $165 million to cover requirements for inflation and currency, the budget request for 2002-2003 had been reduced by $75 million in real terms. In order to accommodate that reduction, the Secretary-General was putting in place measures in several support areas that had the potential to allow the Organization to function within the resources appropriated.

14. Current year-end projections for 2002 were for a zero cash balance for the regular budget and related reserves compared with a positive balance of $2 million on 31 December 2001. That projection assumed full payment of the amount of its 2002 assessment by the major contributors and a similar pattern of payment as in 2001 by other contributors. On that basis, the regular budget was expected to experience a cash deficit at various points during the second half of the year, before ending the year with a zero balance. The situation of the regular budget therefore remained very fragile. As for the tribunals, the need for cross-borrowing was anticipated, and in future, cross-borrowing from peacekeeping operations might become a necessity.

15. Projections for peacekeeping were difficult to make and could change significantly at any time, but

current projections forecast the cash balance at the end of 2002 to be around $1.3 billion.

16. As for debt owed to Member States, new obligations in 2002 were projected to be substantially higher, at $811 million, but total disbursements were expected to be around $890 million for troop and equipment debt, and a considerably lower total level of debt, $666 million, was forecast at year-end. Overall, at the end of 2002, all troop obligations through July 2002 were projected to be paid, leaving only six months of outstanding troop costs.

17. Based on those projections of income and expenditure, total cash balances at the end of 2002 were expected to be $1,328 million, made up of a zero balance for the combined regular budget accounts, $11 million for the international tribunals and $1,317 million for peacekeeping operations. The combined balances remained fairly high compared with recent years.

18. That relatively healthy total, however, masked a potential problem. Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 53/241, the Secretary-General could no longer cross-borrow from active peacekeeping missions, only closed ones. Additionally, he could only borrow from the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund for new or expanded peacekeeping missions. Increasingly, therefore, overall cash resources might not be as freely available for cross-borrowing to meet short-term cash deficits in the regular budget or tribunals.

19. Approximately $400 million was available in the accounts of completed peacekeeping operations, currently the only source of cross-borrowing for the regular budget and the fluctuating needs of ongoing peacekeeping missions. Final reports on several of those closed missions would be presented in 2002, as those resources could be rapidly depleted. In that case, the Organization could lose its safety valve and face the very real possibility of further financial stress if the cash resources in other accounts were depleted.

20. In conclusion, 2001 saw a significant improvement in the financial situation of the Organization: arrears were reduced, as were debts to troop and equipment providers. But significant arrears remained and reserves were depleted. Decisions that had been or might be taken by the General Assembly had reduced flexibility in dealing with temporary cash shortfalls and could lead to cash difficulties in the future. The Secretary-General was committed to addressing those problems, but success depended on the support and commitment of Member States to the Organization.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.50

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

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11 April 2002

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 50th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 14 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of the outcome of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47

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02-28599 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Second performance report: Final appropriation for the biennium 2000-2001 (A/56/866 and A/56/868)

1. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the final appropriation for the biennium 2000-2001 (A/56/866), recalled that the final performance report for the biennium 2000-2001 had indicated an estimated final expenditure of $2,561,578,000. The Fifth Committee had decided that, rather than appropriate funds, it would give a commitment authority in that amount and revert to consideration of the final appropriation at the Assembly's resumed fifty-sixth session in March 2002. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the final appropriation for which approval by the General Assembly was sought, was $2,561,186,900.

2. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/868), said that the Advisory Committee had received detailed information on the budget performance in respect of the financial period 2000-2001, which was contained in the annex to its report. Unliquidated obligations in respect of 2000-2001 had amounted to $74,936,000, which represented 2.9 per cent of expenditure, a significant decrease as compared with the previous two bienniums. The Advisory Committee welcomed that development and pointed out that, as a consequence, significant savings should not be expected as the result of any future cancellations of obligations for that biennium. Amounts resulting from cancellations of any obligations would be confirmed after the audit relating to the biennium 2002-2003, which would be reported by the Board of Auditors and considered by the General Assembly in autumn 2004. Member States would therefore be credited in January 2005.

3. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the final appropriation resolution for the biennium 2000-2001 as set out in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/866). In so doing, the General Assembly would have also approved the necessary transfers among sections.

4. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation understood that there was a deficit of $35 million in the budget of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services for the biennium 2000-2001. He asked how that deficit would be addressed, taking into account the current budgetary procedures and the financial rules and regulations.

5. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) recalled that the Secretary-General's second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (A/56/674 and Corr.1) had provided an estimate of the anticipated final level of expenditures. In its related resolution, the General Assembly had approved a combined revised appropriation and commitment authority. The overexpenditure had therefore been authorized and action on it had already been taken by the General Assembly.

6. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation would address the question of the deficit in greater detail in the informal consultations. It would have been helpful if the Controller had cited the number of the General Assembly resolution to which he had referred.

7. His delegation had earlier asked two questions concerning the budget to which the Secretariat had so far not responded. The first question had been a request for written comparative tables for the budgets for the bienniums 2000-2001 and 2002-2003. The second question had concerned the percentage reductions in each section of the budget of the previous biennium approved by the General Assembly. His delegation wished a written response and recalled that the same request had been made on two previous occasions, but without result.

8. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that the Assembly resolution in question was 56/240 A of 24 December 2001. The reference was contained in the first line of the summary on page 1 of document A/56/866.

9. Responding to the second question raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, his understanding was that some tables had been circulated during the informal consultations on the budget proposals and the reductions decided upon by the Committee. If the information contained in those tables

was not satisfactory, the Secretariat would be pleased to provide further details.

10. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the information provided was not satisfactory and his delegation was still awaiting answers in writing to the questions it had raised.

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of the outcome of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (A/56/869; A/C.5/56/38)

11. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the Secretary-General's statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1 contained in document A/C.5/56/38, recalled that the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance had reported to the General Assembly during the main part of its fifty-sixth session and that the Third Committee had taken up the item but had not completed its deliberations. In February 2002, it had adopted a draft resolution concerning follow-up activities to the Conference. The activities proposed in the draft resolution were summarized in paragraph 3 of document A/C.5/56/38 and the additional requirements of $1,178,700, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, were detailed in paragraph 5. The required resources would be charged against the contingency fund, which would be severely depleted as a result.

12. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's related report (A/56/869), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1, expenditures would arise not exceeding $1,074,800 under section 22, Human rights, and $103,900 under section 32, Staff assessment (to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment) of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, as stated in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report. Additional appropriations would be considered by the Assembly in accordance with the procedures set out in resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 for the use and operation of the contingency fund. However, in view of the fact that the draft resolution was proposed for adoption in March 2002, and that the activities were to be implemented immediately thereafter, it would be necessary, during the current part of the resumed fifty-sixth session, to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments up to the amount indicated in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report. Such additional appropriation as might be required would then be considered at the main part of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

13. **Mr. Stoffer** (United States of America) said that the issue was a sensitive one for his country and for many other regions of the world. His delegation would have some questions to raise in the informal consultations concerning the appropriations and the structure of the proposed Anti-Discrimination Unit.

14. **Ms. Sanchez-Lorenzo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, recalled that the matter had also been raised by the Group of 77 and China. Her delegation hoped that the Committee would recommend the draft resolution to the General Assembly for adoption and that the related expenditures would be appropriated in accordance with the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund.

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47

15. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47 in her capacity as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters. Although the resolution submitted by Venezuela in its capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, the draft text was the result of consultations and was being submitted with a request that it be approved by the Committee for adoption by the Assembly.

16. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that the draft resolution had financial implications. The Secretariat was unable to provide the required services within the budget that had been approved and was currently preparing a statement of programme budget implications for the Committee.

17. **Mr. Stoffer** (United States of America) said that his delegation had had informal consultations with the

Permanent Representative of Venezuela, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China and had understood that, pending further consultations to resolve the outstanding issues in a harmonious manner, the draft resolution would not be introduced.

18. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that the draft resolution had been submitted with a view to seeking consensus on the proposals it contained.

19. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that he had previously been coordinating consultations on agenda item 123 and had been surprised to see in the Journal that morning that a draft resolution submitted on behalf of the Group of 77 and China would be discussed. Since consensus had not been reached on the draft text, he wondered whether his services as coordinator were required and suggested that the Secretariat should consider who should coordinate further consultations on the draft resolution.

20. **The Chairman** said that the representative of Canada was also a member of the Bureau and should have cleared the matter with the Bureau before raising it publicly.

21. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that the Group of 77 and China wished the Secretariat to provide an indication of the amounts that would be required to restore conference and Internet services to permanent missions.

22. **The Chairman** said that the matter would be considered further in informal consultations.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.51

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

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15 April 2002

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 51st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 15 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of the outcome of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (*continued*)

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02-28807 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 129: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/56/464/Add.1)

1. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the improvement in the financial situation of the United Nations during 2001, but expressed concern that the situation might be different in 2002. Member States had a legal obligation to pay their assessed contributions to the Organization in full, on time and without conditions, although sympathetic understanding should be extended to States which were temporarily unable to meet that obligation as a result of genuine economic difficulties. The recurring problem of negative cash flow in the second half of every year, which had resulted in cross-borrowing, was due mainly to late payments by the major contributors. The Group would like to know how the Secretariat intended to resolve the situation without resorting to cross-borrowing. Debt owed to Member States had stood at $748 million at the end of 2001, largely because of outstanding arrears. All Member States in arrears, particularly the largest contributor, should settle those arrears unconditionally.

2. The Group noted the relative improvement in reimbursements to developing countries that provided troops and equipment to peacekeeping operations and hoped that that trend would continue. However, it was concerned that "write-offs" of some liquidated peacekeeping missions had not yet been certified and that the attention of Member States had not been drawn to the problem. It would like to know what measures had been taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to solve the problem as a matter of urgency. In addition, the Claims and Information Management Section should honour all commitments made to troop-contributing countries for the reimbursement of the corresponding amounts. The Group would like to be informed of all pending claims. It would also like the reimbursement process to be transparent, fair and based on objective criteria.

3. **Mr. Soto Gúrpide** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the improved position of the Organization's finances and said that the key element in sustaining that improvement was prompt payment by all Member States of their financial contributions. It was therefore regrettable that the number of countries paying their regular budget contributions in full had declined in 2001, reversing a seven-year trend. The small margin of regular budget cash at the end of 2001, the high level of unpaid peacekeeping assessments and the need for cross-borrowing to pay for tribunal costs all underlined the continuing precariousness of the financial situation. However, the European Union was pleased to note that the Russian Federation had now paid its peacekeeping arrears in full.

4. All Member States should respect their legal obligations to the United Nations, in particular the largest contributor, whose level of arrears was alarming. The late payment of contributions was the main cause of the Organization's fragile financial position. All countries awaiting reimbursements had a right to receive them without further delay. Further challenges lay ahead, including the need to pay for increased security and the need to consider options for structural improvement of the United Nations Headquarters building, the financing for which ultimately had to be the obligation of the host country. In addition, peacekeeping remained a central component of the Organization's activities; the European Union supported it unreservedly, but would continue to work to improve its efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

5. **Mr. Connor** (Under-Secretary-General for Management) said that, regrettably, it was likely that cross-borrowing would have to continue, as there was no other source of interim financing. Moreover, the funds available for cross-borrowing were being circumscribed.

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of the outcome of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (*continued*)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.49

6. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, introduced the draft decision contained in document A/C.5/56/L.49, which had been submitted by

the delegation of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. She expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

7. With regard to the information circular contained in document ST/IC/2002/13, she reiterated the request that had been made by the Group at previous meetings that the Secretariat provide information in writing about the recent cuts in services, particularly Internet services for permanent missions.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.52

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

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15 April 2002

Original: English

Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 52nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 15 March 2002, at 5 p.m.

Chairman Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

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02-28813 (E)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 5.35 p.m.

Agenda item 121: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.45)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.45

1. **Mr. Orr** (Canada), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.45.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.45 was adopted.*

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Construction of office space facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.43)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.43

3. **Mr. Wins** (Uruguay), Rapporteur, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.43.

4. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.43 was adopted.*

Integrated Management Information System (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.46)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.46

5. **Mr. Lenefors** (Sweden) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.46 on behalf of the Chairman.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.46 was adopted.*

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.48)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48

7. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48.

8. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48 was adopted.*

Utilization of the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs (A/C.5/56/39)

9. **The Chairman** drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the utilization of the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs (A/C.5/56/39).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48, he took it that the Committee wished to take note that an unallocated balance of $34,303,300 remained against the provision of $98,338,700 for special political missions for 2002-2003.

11. *It was so decided.*

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1: Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (*continued*) (A/56/869; A/C.5/56/38; A/C.5/56/L.49)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.49

12. **The Chairman** recalled that the Committee had begun its consideration of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1 at its 50th meeting and had decided to refer the matter to informal consultations. At its 51st meeting, however, the representative of Cuba, in her capacity as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, had introduced draft decision A/C.5/56/L.49.

13. **Mr. Kendall** (Argentina), speaking as coordinator of the informal consultations, said that it had not been possible to achieve a consensus text on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1.

14. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, urged the Committee to take action on the draft decision before it.

15. **Mr. Soto Gúrpide** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, requested a brief suspension of the meeting to enable his delegation to finalize the text of an amendment to the draft decision.

16. **The Chairman** pointed out that the Secretariat would be unable to provide conference services after 6.10 p.m.

17. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it was difficult to believe that it was not actually possible to provide conference services. Rather, it appeared that delegations were being held hostage to the Secretariat's whims. The situation was suspicious. In any case, it was not acceptable that the Committee should be forced either to conclude its work at 6.10 p.m. or to continue without interpretation.

18. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, expressed the hope that the Committee would continue to be provided with conference services until such time as it had completed its work.

19. **The Chairman** said that note had been taken of the concerns expressed.

The meeting was suspended at 5.55 p.m. and resumed at 6 p.m.

20. **Mr. Soto Gúrpide** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, proposed the insertion of the words "subject to this decision" after the words "endorses the recommendations of the Advisory Committee" that began in the penultimate line of the first paragraph, and the insertion of the following text at the beginning of paragraph (a):

> "Decides to recommend to the General Assembly to approve neither the funds requested for the expenses related to regional meetings as described in paragraphs 3 (a) (i) and 3 (c) of document A/C.5/56/38, nor the related proposed changes in the narrative of section 22 and".

21. He pointed out that, should the amendment be adopted, it would be necessary to revise the dollar amounts specified in the draft decision.

22. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) proposed the insertion of the words "subject to paragraph (c) below" after the words "recommends to the General Assembly to authorize" in the first line of paragraph (b), and the addition of the following paragraph:

> "(c) Decides, pending submission of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of the budget and management practices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as requested in General Assembly resolution 56/253, to defer consideration of this item."

23. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, said that, while her delegation had no objection to the amendment proposed by the representative of Spain, it could not endorse the United States proposal, which had not even been considered in the informal consultations. Her delegation would be forced to request a separate recorded vote on the amendment if the representative of the United States insisted on its inclusion in the draft decision.

24. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that it was his understanding that the Committee took decisions by consensus. Given the limited time available, action on the draft decision should be deferred until a fuller discussion was possible.

25. **Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa) said that, as the representative of the country that had hosted the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, he knew that the issues discussed had been very difficult for many delegations. He was grateful for the Spanish amendment, which had been proposed in a constructive spirit and with a view to finding a way forward; the United States amendment, on the other hand, had come as a surprise. The Committee should take action on the draft decision immediately, even if a recorded vote was necessary. His delegation had been very flexible, and he regretted that it had not been possible to achieve a consensus.

26. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that, in the interests of harmony, his delegation would withdraw its amendment.

27. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.49, as orally amended, was adopted.*

28. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to dissociate itself from the consensus on the draft decision for the reasons it had set out in its statement in the Third Committee on draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1.

29. **Mr. Adam** (Israel) said that his delegation also wished to dissociate itself from the consensus. Its decision not to request a vote on the draft decision was without prejudice to the views it had expressed in the Third Committee, where it had voted against draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1.

30. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that his delegation had dissociated itself from all references in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, whether direct or indirect, to the situation in the Middle East. It had also dissociated itself from any language in draft resolution A/C.3/56/L.84/Rev.1 that could be construed as welcoming or endorsing or encouraging the implementation of provisions of the Declaration and Programme of Action to which Canada had not agreed. It was therefore unable to support any decision that might be interpreted as endorsing those documents in their entirety. At the same time, it believed that they contained helpful language and identified useful strategies for combating racism. It had therefore decided not to request a vote on the draft decision but instead to dissociate itself from the consensus.

31. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) expressed satisfaction that the spirit of consensus had prevailed. The results of the Durban Conference were important for the whole Organization.

32. **Ms. Buchanan** (New Zealand) said that her delegation had been pleased to join the consensus on the draft decision and to support the provision of resources for the implementation of the Durban Programme of Action. She wished to recall, however, that New Zealand, along with Australia, had been excluded from the Asia and Pacific region preparatory meeting for the Durban Conference. Normal practice was to base participation in such regional events on membership of regional commissions, in New Zealand's case the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Irrespective of the source of funding, should the regional meetings to be organized by the Anti-Discrimination Unit proceed, participation by Member States should reflect membership of regional commissions.

33. **Mr. Fox** (Australia) said that Australia was unequivocal in its opposition to racism in all its forms and was committed to strong action, both domestically and internationally, to address that problem. However, the concerns his delegation had expressed in Durban affected its views on how the international community should approach the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. As it had stated in the Third Committee, it could not support a text that endorsed without qualification the outcomes of the Durban Conference. Clearly, it was also unable to support the provision of resources for the full implementation of those outcomes.

34. Australia, which had been excluded from the preparatory process for the Durban Conference, agreed that the funds requested for the expenses related to follow-up regional meetings, which it did not regard as mandated, should not be approved. His delegation was concerned at the duplication of mechanisms relating to racism, given that there was already a special rapporteur on racism. In view of those considerations, it wished to dissociate itself from the consensus on the draft decision just adopted.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

United Nations A/C.5/56/SR.53

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 53rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 19 March 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Orr (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Canada)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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02-29015 (E)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*)

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*)

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*continued*)

Agenda item 121: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Action taken on certain items (*continued*)

Completion of the work of the Fifth Committee at the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly

In the absence of Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana), Mr. Orr (Canada), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 122: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Final budget appropriations for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*) (A/56/866, A/56/868; A/C.5/56/L.53)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.53

1. **Mr. Kendall** (Argentina) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.53 on the final budget appropriations for the biennium 2000-2001 on behalf of the Chairman.

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.53 was adopted.*

Comprehensive study of the question of honorariums payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/56/311; A/C.5/56/L.55)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.55

3. **Mr. Ivashchenko** (Ukraine) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.55, entitled "Comprehensive study of the question of honorariums payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations".

4. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.55 was adopted.*

Standards of accommodation for air travel (*continued*) (A/54/382, A/55/488, A/56/7, A/56/426, A/56/630; A/C.5/56/L.60)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.60

5. **Mr. Ivashchenko** (Ukraine) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.60, entitled "Standards of accommodation for air travel".

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.60 was adopted.*

Agenda item 123: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.47 and L.56

7. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico) introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56, which was the result of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47.

8. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56 was adopted.*

9. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that, as a result of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56, the measures affecting Internet services provided to Member States were rescinded. The costs would be financed from the savings resulting from changes in the level of honorariums payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, as provided for in draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.55. With regard to the provision of conference and support services to bodies and committees, every effort would continue to be made, as requested in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, to minimize the adverse effects on Member States. The other measures outlined in the note verbale of the Secretary-General dated 28 February 2002 and in ST/IC/2002/13 would continue to be in effect at the current level of appropriation for the biennium 2002-2003, as set forth in General Assembly resolution 56/254. The requested report on the implementation of resolution 56/242 within the resources specified in resolution 56/254 would be prepared for submission at the second part of the Assembly's resumed session.

10. **Ms. Silot Bravo**, speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, expressed appreciation for the efforts that had been made to reach consensus on such a sensitive issue. The Group of 77 and China expected the Secretariat to implement the resolution on the pattern of conferences in such a way that the work of Member States would not be adversely affected.

11. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) drew attention to paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. It was his delegation's understanding that implementation of the budget appropriation resolution should not affect the implementation of the resolution on the pattern of conferences. Conference services were the basis of the Organization's ability to communicate and as such should receive special attention; he could not accept a lack of resources as a reason for cuts in those services.

The report requested from the Secretary-General should identify all possible areas for the financing of conference services and section 27 D of the programme budget should be reviewed to determine the level of resources required.

12. **The Chairman** said that, in the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56, he took it that draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47 was now withdrawn by its sponsors.

13. *It was so decided.*

Documentation availability in six languages on the United Nations Web site (continued) (A/C.5/56/12; A/C.5/56/L.57)

Review of public information activities in the United Nations (continued) (A/C.5/56/17; A/C.5/56/L.58)

ESCWA documents and publications (continued) (A/C.5/56/19; A/C.5/56/L.59)

Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.57, A/C.5/56/L.58 and A/C.5/56/L.59

14. **Mr. Schlessinger** (Austria) introduced draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.57, entitled "Documentation availability in six languages on the United Nations Web site"; A/C.5/56/L.58, entitled "Review of public information activities in the United Nations"; and A/C.5/56/L.59, entitled "ESCWA documents and publications".

15. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) drew attention to an editorial correction in the Spanish version of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.58.

16. *Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.57, L.58 and L.59 were adopted.*

17. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation would have preferred to consider the three draft resolutions separately, but it had shown flexibility as the resolutions were mainly procedural in nature. With regard to draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.59, in particular, it looked forward with great interest to the progress report on the production of documents and publications in Arabic.

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.50)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.51)

Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.50 and L.51

18. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) introduced draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.50 and L.51. The figures contained in paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.50 should read "223,169,800 dollars gross (223,189,600 dollars net)".

19. *Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.50 and L.51, as orally revised, were adopted.*

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*)

Follow-up investigation into possible fee-splitting arrangements between defence counsel and indigent detainees at the International Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (continued) (A/C.5/56/L.44)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.44

20. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.44, on behalf of the Chairman, said that, in paragraph 3, the words "Secretary-General" should be inserted in place of "Office of Internal Oversight Services". She urged the draft resolution's adoption by consensus.

21. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.44, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo *(continued)* (A/C.5/56/L.52)

Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.52

22. **Mr. Wins** (Uruguay), Rapporteur, introducing draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.52, said that, in the third line of paragraph 10, the words "and any other relevant options that might arise" should be inserted after the words "the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions", and that, in the first line of paragraph 11, the words "as a matter of priority" should be inserted after the word "submit".

23. **Mrs. Salim** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management), in response to a question posed at a previous meeting by the representative of the United States of America concerning mission subsistence allowance (MSA) rates in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), said that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), in its report on the audit of the establishment and management of MSA rates (A/56/648), had recommended that the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) should review MSA rates for a number of peacekeeping missions, including MONUC, as OIOS had found the rates to be too high. Accordingly, OHRM had conducted field surveys in two missions: the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) in February and April 2001, respectively. In addition, questionnaire surveys had been carried out for eight missions, including MONUC.

24. As a result of the survey findings, MSA rates for missions, including MONUC, had been revised. Missions were advised that, while MSA rates that had been revised upwards would be implemented with immediate effect implementation of those MSA rates that had been revised downwards, as had been the case for MONUC, would take effect three months after the date of promulgation in order to ensure that the operational requirements of the missions would continue to be met and to enable mission personnel to make the necessary financial plans and to adjust their living expenditure patterns accordingly.

25. Following the announcement of the promulgation of the revised MSA rates, a number of missions, as well as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), had expressed considerable concern about the outcome of the questionnaire surveys. Consequently, it had been agreed that OHRM would conduct field surveys in selected missions, including MONUC, in January and February 2002.

26. Under Staff Rule 103.21 (b), the Secretary-General had the authority to set the rates and conditions for MSA payable on each mission assignment. The methodology for setting MSA rates was set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/1997/6. Section 3.1 provided that MSA rates should be determined on the basis of cost of long-term accommodation, food and miscellaneous expenses at the duty station of the mission assignment. Thus, MSA was intended to cover the living expenses of personnel during the period of assignment to a peacekeeping, peacemaking or special mission. Under miscellaneous expenses, account was taken of expenditures deemed necessary to maintain reasonable living conditions in the mission area. In addition to the data it collected through field and questionnaire surveys, OHRM also took into account data from the cost-of-living and daily subsistence allowance surveys conducted by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in order to ensure as complete and accurate a profile as possible of the cost of living in mission areas.

27. The data analysis and mission reports were now complete and the results of the MSA surveys had been communicated to DPKO on 12 March 2002. The revised MSA rates for MONUC would take effect from 1 April 2002.

28. *Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.52, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 121: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Action taken on certain items
(A/C.5/56/L.54/Rev.1)

Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.54/Rev.1

29. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft decision A/C.5/56/L.54/Rev.1.

30. *Draft decision A/C.5/56/L.54/Rev.1 was adopted.*

31. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the Committee was to consider a number of issues under agenda item 126, Human resources management, at the second part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. He hoped that the relevant reports, some of which were to have been considered at the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session, would be issued in good time.

32. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, said that those delegations attached special importance to the agenda item on human resources management and to the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 55/258. They therefore regretted that it had not been possible for the Committee to consider all the relevant issues at the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. She trusted that delegations would have available to them at the second part of the resumed fifty-sixth session all necessary information and reports and that the documents would be provided sufficiently ahead of time to enable the Committee to give adequate consideration to those important issues.

Completion of the work of the Fifth Committee at the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly

33. **The Chairman** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work at the first part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

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Summary record of the 54th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 13 May 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng ..... (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/56/L.61/Rev.1)

1. **The Chairman** drew attention to the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation for the second part of the resumed session of the Fifth Committee of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly (A/C.5/56/L.61/Rev.1). The Secretariat had made considerable efforts to ensure that most of the reports were issued on time. However, as detailed in the informal paper, entitled "Documents proposed to be postponed to the fifty-seventh session", some documents had been submitted late for reasons beyond the Secretariat's control and others were not yet ready for submission. The Bureau had been informed by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that the Advisory Committee would not be in a position to consider those documents in depth or to provide a comprehensive report on time for consideration by the Fifth Committee. He therefore wished to propose that consideration of the reports relating to contingent-owned equipment, rates of reimbursement to Governments of troop-contributing States and the question of death and disability be deferred to the Assembly's fifty-seventh session.

2. The Bureau had also been informed that the report of the Secretary-General on a monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management required a substantial amount of preparatory work, including data gathering and analysis. Although considerable progress had been made, the report had yet to be finalized and it was therefore proposed that its consideration be also deferred to the fifty-seventh session.

3. Consideration of all available reports was envisaged in the proposed programme of work. It must be recalled, however, that the Committee would not have the luxury of extending its meetings beyond the third week or of holding evening or weekend meetings.

4. **Mr. Pulido** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, requested that consideration of the programme of work be deferred to the next meeting, when he would be in a position to make a statement.

5. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that in order to avoid the problems that had been encountered the previous year, a margin of flexibility should be preserved with respect to the number of meetings. The Planning and Meetings Servicing Section should bear in mind the possible need to extend the current part of the Assembly's resumed session into a fourth week. A further informal meeting on the financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) might also be required.

6. **The Chairman** said that he took it that the Committee wished to defer further consideration of the proposed programme of work to the following meeting.

7. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 17: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (*continued*)

(b) Appointment of members of the Committee on Contributions (*continued*) (A/56/102/Add.1 and A/C.5/56/6/Add.1)

8. **The Chairman** drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General regarding notification of the resignation of Mr. Kazuo Watanabe of Japan from membership of the Committee on Contributions (A/56/102/Add.1). In another note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/56/6/Add.1), the General Assembly was informed that the Government of Japan had nominated Mr. Kenshiro Akimoto to fill the vacant post. In a note verbale dated 26 April 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations, he had been informed that the nomination was endorsed by the Group of Asian States.

9. He took it that the Committee wished to appoint Mr. Kenshiro Akimoto as a member of the Committee on Contributions for the period beginning on the date of appointment and expiring on 31 December 2003.

10. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 120: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*) (A/56/5 (Vol. II), A/56/66/Add.2 and A/56/887)

11. **Mr. Bhana** (Director of External Audit of South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Chairman of the Board of Auditors, introduced the report of the Board on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period ending 30 June 2001 (A/56/5 (Vol. II)). The report addressed the three special requests made by the Advisory Committee and by the General Assembly, and included an annex commenting on the

implementation of the recommendations contained in the Board's previous report (A/55/5 (Vol. II)).

12. In response to the Advisory Committee's request that the Board should undertake a comprehensive assessment of the arrangements for contingent-owned equipment, the report focused on the implementation of the inspection and verification procedures required in terms of the reformed contingent-owned-equipment process. The Board had found that such verification reports were not always prepared in a timely manner and had recommended that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should undertake a detailed evaluation of resource requirements at missions in order to rectify the deficiencies noted by the Board.

13. The Advisory Committee had also requested that the Board should review the adequacy of the resident audit function. The Board had measured that function against international internal auditing standards. In general, the Board was of the opinion that the resident audit function was an important oversight mechanism, but that improvements were needed in such areas as training, risk assessment, quality control and reporting. As requested by the Advisory Committee, the Board would continue to pay special attention to the resident audit function and, in particular, to ascertain the extent of implementation of its recommendations.

14. For its part, the General Assembly had requested the Board to monitor the process of objective-setting by missions and the measurements of their use. While progress by the Administration was evident, the process of objective-setting was still in its infancy and the Administration should closely monitor its implementation in order to provide guidance and support in a timely manner.

15. As in the previous audit report, the Board had placed emphasis on the same two issues without qualifying its audit opinion on the fair presentation of the financial statements. Firstly, the Board had been unable to obtain adequate assurance as to the reasonableness of the value of non-expendable equipment worth approximately $696 million held at peacekeeping missions, as disclosed in note 9 to the financial statements, mainly as a result of unreconciled differences in respect of the opening balances and weaknesses in the custody and control of equipment. The second issue was related to verified claims amounting to approximately $8 million, which had been submitted under the old system for reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment not accrued for in the accounts. The Board had noted an improvement of nearly $32 million, representing some 80 per cent, over the prior period. In the Board's opinion, however, the liabilities and related expenses in the Organization's accounts had been understated by some $8 million. That technical issue had been debated at length in the past and, while the Board recognized the procedural complexities of accruing for such claims, it was of the opinion that the verified claims did represent valid expenditure that should have been accrued.

16. As for the other main audit findings, long-outstanding amounts included in accounts payable had remained unpaid at year's end; policies and procedures regarding the utilization of chartered aircraft by non-mission personnel were not always adhered to; and not all sections of two missions had submitted procurement plans in a timely manner, resulting in the inability of the missions to develop an overall procurement plan. Moreover, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) had experienced difficulties in resolving issues related to their tax status; the pre-deployment selection of civilian police remained an area of concern, since a significant proportion of officers failed mandatory tests upon arrival at a mission; and the database of cases maintained by the Liquidation Unit differed from the database maintained by the Headquarters Property Survey Board and discrepancies had not been followed up in a timely manner.

17. The Board had recommended that the Administration should enforce compliance with United Nations regulations and rules, improve controls ensuring complete and accurate custody and recording of non-expendable equipment, evaluate resource requirements and benchmark resources to discharge responsibilities under the contingent-owned equipment procedures, improve procurement planning and improve procedures to liquidate missions in a timely manner. It had also noted the comments in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/887) regarding the monitoring and effective implementation of the Board's recommendations. The Board welcomed the Advisory Committee's proposal to discuss the merits of more frequent consultations with it on the matter.

18. **Ms. Ferrena-Mahmud** (Chief of the Oversight Support Unit of the Department of Management)

introduced the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ending 30 June 2001 (A/56/66/Add.2). As was evident from the high rate of implementation of the Board's recommendations, the Administration continued to attach great importance to the timely and comprehensive implementation of all recommendations. For the most part, the report addressed only those recommendations that required further comments or clarifications. In the few cases in which the Board's recommendations remained unimplemented, the Administration was either taking appropriate steps to ensure their early implementation or was unable to proceed with implementation owing to severe budgetary constraints, among other factors. The Administration would continue to monitor and review the implementation of all of the Board's recommendations.

19. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the report of the Advisory Committee on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/56/887). Additional comments had been made in the Advisory Committee's separate reports on peacekeeping operations (A/56/887/Add.1-10). The Advisory Committee had welcomed the comments and recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

20. Two aspects of the Board's report warranted particular attention, namely, the two special studies on the resident audit service and the management of contingent-owned equipment, which had been requested by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee welcomed the measures being taken by various missions to improve implementation of the new contingent-owned equipment arrangements, including the establishment of dedicated units for that purpose. Headquarters could help encourage the sharing of best practices in that regard.

21. The Secretariat, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and individual missions must take action to realize the full potential of the resident audit service. The Advisory Committee had indicated some of the steps to be taken and had drawn attention to the plan to expand the service of investigators. It had also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the subject.

22. The Board had also commented on the question of objective-setting, as the General Assembly had requested. It was the first time that missions had tried to introduce results-based budgeting techniques in the mission budget process. The Advisory Committee had submitted extensive comments on the subject in its report (A/56/887) and had cautioned against what appeared to be an overemphasis on theory and on unrealistic assumptions as to what could be accomplished. The Advisory Committee stressed the need for the Secretariat and missions to be pragmatic and to tailor results-based budgeting techniques to the particular circumstances of each mission, including its mandate, programmes, activities and services. In particular, objectives, definitions of indicators and expected accomplishments should not be forced where it was not practical to define and implement those elements in the manner indicated by the Advisory Committee.

23. In paragraph 11 of the report, the Advisory Committee recommended a change in the manner in which reports on follow-up action to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors were presented and was willing to hold further consultations on the issue of effective implementation of the Board's recommendations.

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/56/813, A/56/832 and Add.1 and A/56/887/Add.8)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/56/822, A/56/893 and A/56/887/Add.7)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (A/56/763, A/56/802 and A/56/887/Add.6)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*) (A/56/840, A/56/862 and A/56/887/Add.9)

Agenda item 139: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (A/56/794 and Corr.1, A/56/820 and A/56/887/Add.5)

Agenda item 141: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/56/833, A/56/855 and A/56/887/Add.3)

Agenda item 144: Financing of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (A/56/842 and A/56/887)

Agenda item 146: Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters (A/56/852 and A/56/887)

Agenda item 149: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (A/56/782, A/56/838 and A/56/887/Add.4)

Agenda item 150: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (A/56/721 and Corr.1, A/56/815 and A/56/887/Add.1)

Agenda item 151: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (A/56/851 and A/56/887)

Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (A/56/698, A/56/773 and A/56/887/Add.2)

Agenda item 155: Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium and the Civilian Police Support Group (A/56/844 and A/56/887)

Agenda item 156: Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (A/56/841 and A/56/887)

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

24. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing in a single statement the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of peacekeeping missions, said that the unpredictable nature of peacekeeping operations sometimes made the orderly process envisaged in General Assembly resolution 49/233 difficult to follow. The Committee had before it the following 41 reports of the Secretary-General: performance reports for 12 ongoing peacekeeping missions for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001; final performance reports for five closed peacekeeping missions; budget estimates for 11 ongoing peacekeeping missions and one new mission to be established for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003; a report on the working conditions of the local staff of UNDOF; a report updating the financial situation of the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF); a report on the disposition of assets for the United Nations Angola Verification Mission/United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (UNAVEM/MONUA); a report on the disposition of assets for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET); the performance report and budget for the support account; the performance report and the budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi; a report on the strategic deployment stocks; six reports dealing with, inter alia, death and disability, implementation of the recommendations of the Committee of 34, and instances where the United Nations was entitled to restitution as a result of non-compliance with status-of-forces or other agreements.

25. The performance reports for the period from July 2000 to June 2001 included $2.63 billion approved by the General Assembly in respect of 12 ongoing missions and expenditures of $2.37 billion, leaving an unspent balance of $250 million. That represented an implementation rate of 90 per cent, about the same as for the previous period. Despite operational fluidity in the large peacekeeping missions in Africa, Kosovo and East Timor, performance had been quite satisfactory. The Advisory Committee's recommendation on disclosure of interest, miscellaneous and other income had been implemented. The reports also included information on training, staff on loan to other missions, expenditure on staff security and details of quick impact projects.

26. The budget estimates for the 12 ongoing missions for the period from July 2002 to June 2003 amounted to $2.61 billion, compared with $2.67 billion for the current year. When the requirements for the support account, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and the one-time costs for the strategic deployment stocks were added, the total amount proposed amounted to $2.91 billion. The Committee would review the budgets for all 12 ongoing operations during the current part of the resumed sessions.

27. Each report contained a section on objective-setting, which included expected accomplishments,

indicative achievements and external factors. The Administration would welcome the Committee's guidance on how the process might be further refined.

28. With regard to the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East, the financial performance report of UNDOF (A/56/813) showed an appropriation of $36.9 million and expenditure of $36.4 million gross, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $575,100 gross. The rate of implementation was more than 98 per cent. Savings had been realized mainly as a result of an actual troop strength that was slightly lower than authorized and lower operating costs. Those savings were offset by additional requirements, including the cost of replacing old pre-fabricated buildings and the increase in local staff salaries.

29. The proposed budget for UNDOF for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/832) was $39 million, the 12.9 per cent increase being due to: continued replacement and upgrading of accommodations, as required in the UNDOF three-year master plan; acquisition and replacement of communication and observation equipment, which was an integral part of the ongoing modernization programme; and the proposed establishment of three international staff posts.

30. The budget for UNDOF (A/56/832/Add.1) outlines the measures that had already been taken to improve the working conditions of local staff. In the light of the General Assembly's request that such measures should continue, and of the special conditions at Camp Faouar, the intention was to elaborate a separate salary scale for Camp Faouar that would take into account the absence of a local labour market in close proximity to the Camp, and which would help UNDOF to attract and retain staff recruited from Damascus. The scale would recognize the increased amount of time spent on work-related activities, thus reflecting a longer workweek than the one on which the Damascus salary scale was based. The financial implications amounted to some $83,000 per year. The report concluded that the steady improvement in working conditions at Camp Faouar since 1995, together with the separate salary scale, would constitute a full response to the General Assembly's request.

31. The total amount appropriated for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was $207 million. Expenditures totalled $183.8, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $23.3 million. Three budgets in one 12-month financial year had led to practical implementation difficulties and to rapid and successive operational changes and reconfiguration of the Force had resulted in a budget implementation rate of 89 per cent.

32. The proposed budget for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/893) amounted to $112.4 million, representing a 17.9 per cent decrease ($24.4 million) compared with the previous period. The proposed budget had been prepared in accordance with the latest reconfiguration plan for the Force, which involved reducing troop strength to approximately 2,000 by January 2003.

33. With regard to the financial performance of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (A/56/763), the amount appropriated had been $450 million and expenditures had totalled $383 million. The unencumbered balance of $66.5 million related mainly to reduced civilian personnel costs.

34. The proposed budget for UNMIK for the 12-month period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/802) amounted to $391.1 million gross, a reduction of 2.2 per cent from the previous period. That reduction reflected a 6.2 decrease in civilian costs but was partially offset by a 5.2 per cent increase in military personnel costs and a 20 per cent increase in operational costs, relating essentially to the restoration of police holding cells and of UNMIK headquarters in Pristina, the conversion of a hotel into office space and the repair of facilities at various locations.

35. The financial performance report of UNMEE (A/56/840) showed a total appropriated amount of $189.2 million gross and expenditures of $164.1 million gross, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $25.1 million gross. The unencumbered balance resulted mainly from lower actual costs for military and civilian personnel owing to delayed deployment, as well as reduced operational and other programme requirements.

36. The proposed budget for the 12-month period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 for the maintenance of UNMEE (A/56/862) amounted to $220.8 million gross. The 11.3 per cent increase ($22.4 million) reflected an increase in military and civilian personnel costs and in operational costs.

37. Turning to the financial performance report of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June

2001 (A/56/794), he said that expenditures against a budget of $52.7 million gross had totalled $50 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $2.6 million, or 5 per cent. Two thirds of the funding for the Mission was provided through voluntary contributions from the Government of Kuwait. The unencumbered balance was attributable to a higher than estimated vacancy rate for international staff, lower costs of rotation travel for military personnel and lower requirements for vehicle spare parts, repairs and maintenance, naval operations, commercial communications and miscellaneous supplies and services.

38. Regarding the budget for UNIKOM for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/820), estimated requirements totalled $50.6 million, which represented a reduction of $534,800, or 1 per cent. The proposed reduction reflected a 12 per cent decrease in military personnel costs and a 5.2 per cent decrease in civilian personnel costs, partially offset by increases of 25.6 per cent in operational costs, 52.7 per cent in other programmes and 4.6 per cent in staff assessment. The increase in operational requirements related, inter alia, to the higher provision for utilities and renovation of premises and the increased costs for air operations in connection with the current letter-of-assist arrangements. The proposed budget provided for 195 military observers, 904 contingent personnel, 67 international staff and 168 local staff, reflecting an increase of 4 international posts, offset by a reduction of 6 local posts, for a net reduction of 2 posts. The proposed changes in staffing were related to the restructuring of the Administrative Division.

39. As stated in the financial performance report of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/56/833), the total resources provided by the General Assembly for the operation and maintenance of the Mission had amounted to $577.7 million. Expenditures had totalled $520.7 million, leaving an unencumbered balance of $56.9 million, or 9.9 per cent of the approved amount, which was primarily attributable to savings of $29.8 million and $3.9 million accrued under military personnel and civilian personnel, respectively, as a result of delayed deployment, with concomitant savings accruing under operational requirements. The budget for UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/855) provided for a reduction of $22.5 million, or 3.3 per cent, to $669.5 million. That amount reflected the resource requirements for the maintenance of the Mission at its currently authorized military strength of 17,500 personnel. However, following the Sierra Leone elections, an assessment of the prevailing security and political situation would be carried out during the second half of 2002, with a view to recommending possible adjustments in the Mission's troop strength. No major troop-level adjustments were expected to be made until early 2003.

40. The final performance report of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) (A/56/842) contained information on reimbursement to troop-contributing Governments, expenditures, cash position and unpaid assessed contributions. The General Assembly was requested to apportion the amount of $172,000 for the period from 1 July to 15 October 1999; to offset that apportionment against the unencumbered balance of $7 million; and to decide that Member States should waive their respective shares in the cash balance of $18.2 million to be applied to the resources required for the financing of the strategic deployment stocks.

41. The financial performance report of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), UNPREDEP and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters (A/56/852) contained updated information on the financing of those missions. In paragraph 10, the General Assembly was requested to decide that Member States should waive their respective shares in the amount of $125.6 million from the balance of appropriations of $196.5 million to be applied to the resources required for the financing of the strategic deployment stocks; to credit the remaining cash balance of $8.3 million to Member States; and to continue to suspend temporarily the provisions of financial regulations 4.3, 4.4 and 4.52 (d) in respect of the remaining surplus of $62.5 million in the light of the cash shortage of the combined forces.

42. The financial performance report of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force In Cyprus (UNFICYP) for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/56/782) showed expenditures of $42.4 million against an appropriation of $43.4 million, leaving an unencumbered balance of $1 million. Voluntary contributions equal to one third of the annual cost of UNFICYP had been made on a continuing basis by the Government of Cyprus, while the Government of Greece had been making annual contributions of $6.5 million. The unencumbered balance had resulted

mainly from lower ration costs for troops, lower salary costs owing to a reduction in the number of local UNFICYP staff posts and lower commercial communications charges. In addition, initiatives had been taken to ensure that the Mission was managed with a maximum of economy and efficiency, including the outsourcing of a number of services.

43. The budget for UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/838) provided for an increase of $2.6 million, or 6.4 per cent, owing to increases of 3 per cent in military personnel costs, 25.4 per cent in operational costs and 54.9 per cent in other programmes, partially offset by a 3.7 per cent decrease in civilian personnel costs. The proposed staffing table comprised 35 civilian police, 44 international staff and 105 local staff, that represented a net decrease of 42 local posts as a result of the outsourcing of catering services.

44. The financial performance report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), (A/56/721) showed expenditures of $26 million for the period 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, against a budget of $30 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $4 million, or 13.4 per cent of the approved amount. An unutilized balance of $1.2 million had accrued under military personnel, owing to deployment of military observers at a lower strength than budgeted. Savings of $2 million had been realized under civilian personnel, due primarily to the engagement of a higher percentage of the staff as mission appointees, 65 per cent compared with the budgeted assumption of 32 per cent; and an unspent balance of $883,800 remained under operational requirements, largely as a result of the acquisition of vehicles at a lower cost than budgeted.

45. The budget for UNOMIG for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/815) provided for an increase of $8.5 million, or 31.6 per cent, reflecting an increase in civilian personnel costs, as a result of the creation of 18 additional posts, and increased requirements for air operations in connection with the proposed addition of a light tactical utility helicopter and a change in the fixed-wing aircraft to a faster jet aircraft with same-day turnaround capability between Tbilisi and Istanbul.

46. In the final performance report of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) (A/56/851), the General Assembly was requested to credit the amount of $25.3 million to Member States from the unencumbered balance of $39.6 million and to suspend temporarily the provisions of financial regulations 4.3, 4.4 and 5.2 (d) in respect of the remaining surplus of $14.3 million in the light of the cash shortage of the Mission.

47. The $158.7 million appropriation for UNMIBH had also provided for the maintenance of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) and the United Nations liaison offices in Belgrade, Zagreb and Sarajevo. As stated in the financial performance report (A/56/698), expenditures against that appropriation had totalled $146.2 million, leaving an unencumbered balance of $12.5 million, or 8 per cent of the approved amount. The unencumbered balance was primarily attributable to savings under civilian personnel, owing to the recruitment of international staff at lower levels than budgeted, and under operational requirements.

48. Concerning the budget for UNMIBH for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/773), the Mission was expected to complete its core mandate by 31 December 2002. The estimated requirements of $78.5 million included $56.9 million for the maintenance of the Mission from 1 July to 31 December 2002 and $21.7 million for its liquidation from 1 January to 30 June 2003. The budget reflected an increase of $61.5 million, or 43.8 per cent.

49. The final performance report of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and the Civilian Police Support Group (A/56/844), the General Assembly was requested to decide that Member States should waive their respective shares in the cash balance of $35.8 million to be applied to the resources required for the financing of the strategic deployment stocks.

50. In the final performance report of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH) and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) (A/56/841), the Assembly was requested to suspend temporarily the provisions of financial regulations 4.3, 4.4 and 5.2 (d) in respect of the remaining surplus of $4 million in the light of the cash shortage in the special account of the missions.

51. Also before the Committee was the report of the Secretary-General on the concept of strategic deployment stocks and its implementation (A/56/870). Establishing a rapid deployment capability had been a cornerstone recommendation of the Panel on United

Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809). In response, the Secretary-General had proposed a strategic reserve for peacekeeping operations to rapidly support opportunities for peace. The budgetary requirements for the implementation of the strategic deployment stocks concept included non-recurrent costs totalling $179.7 million. The cost of establishing the stocks would be charged to the budget of the United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) at Brindisi on a one-time basis. It would be partially offset by the fund balances available in several closed missions, for which final performance reports were being considered by the Committee. Ongoing costs, such as those relating to staff and maintenance, estimated at $6 million per year, would be met through the UNLB budget.

52. In order to ensure readiness for rapid deployment, financial authority was required for the Secretary-General to commit funds for procurement purposes before the adoption of a mission mandate. Accordingly, it was proposed that pre-mandate commitment authority up to the amount of $50 million should be granted to the Secretary-General when the establishment of a new peacekeeping mission was anticipated. The procedures that would govern the granting of that commitment authority was set out in paragraphs 30 to 37 of the report.

53. The financial performance report of UNLB (A/56/760) showed expenditures for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 of $7.8 million against a budget of $9.3 million, leaving an unencumbered balance of $1.6 million, or 17 per cent of the approved amount. The unencumbered balance was attributable to an average vacancy rate of 29 per cent for international staff and lower than budgeted requirements under premises/accommodations, transport operations, communications, other equipment, supplies and services, and air and surface freight. The budget for the Logistics Base for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/871) amounted to $16.2 million, which represented an increase of $7.2 million, or 80.1 per cent. The proposed increase reflected the post and non-post resources required to undertake the increased level of activities arising from the revised concept of operations for the Logistics Base. The budget was presented along programmatic lines, as set out in annex III to document A/55/830.

54. **Mr. Sheehan** (Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support) briefed the Committee on the concept of strategic deployment stocks and its implementation. The objective of a strategic reserve was to provide the Organization with the capability to deploy new peacekeeping missions within the rapid deployment time frames. In order to achieve the necessary level of materiel readiness, it was proposed that goods and commodities, including vehicles, communications and engineering equipment and accommodations, would be procured by the Secretariat and pre-positioned and stored at UNLB as strategic deployment stocks. Services, such as strategic lift, construction services and expendables, including fuel, rations and water, would be procured from vendors prior to the adoption of a Security Council resolution establishing a new mission, using pre-mandate commitment authority. In that connection, the Advisory Committee had concluded that the existing mechanisms for committing funds were sufficient and that a letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General expressing concurrence with the Secretary-General's intention to plan and prepare for a possible new mission would be sufficient to trigger the implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A.

55. Concerning the timetable for rapid deployment, experience had shown that new peacekeeping operations could often be anticipated prior to the adoption of a full mandate. For planning purposes, "D-day" was designated as the estimated date of adoption of a new Security Council resolution. Planning for rapid deployment would normally commence about 60 days before D-day, or at D-60 days. His Office was currently planning and preparing for the establishment of strategic deployment stocks. If the concept was approved, procurement would commence in July 2002, the Logistics Base would begin receiving stocks in autumn 2002 and the materiel reserve would be in place by early to mid-2003.

56. With regard to the size of stocks, both the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Advisory Committee had recommended that coverage should be maintained for one complex mission per year. According to the mission profile established, such a mission would comprise some 10,000 troops, 50 per cent of them self-sustaining; 375 international staff; 500 military observers; 500 civilian police; and 575 local staff. If a modular stockpile approach was adopted, the budgetary requirements for the necessary strategic deployment stocks would amount to $146.2 million.

57. Currently, UNLB functioned mainly as a logistics depot for existing and closing missions. Should the

General Assembly approve the concept of strategic deployment stocks, the role of the Logistics Base would be significantly expanded and additional posts would be required. The Advisory Committee had recommended the establishment of 24 additional posts, for a total of 130, and the upward reclassification of six existing posts. In his view, implementation of the concept could proceed with that staffing level, provided that there was the flexibility to hire contractual staff for surge periods.

58. He recognized the need to improve management capacity at the Logistics Base, in particular, by streamlining planning, policies, standard operating procedures and inventory management. Mindful of the quantity of expensive materiel that would be stored at UNLB, his Office would adopt a cautious approach to implementing the concept of strategic deployment stocks. The provision of logistic support to rapid deployment was achievable. If approved, the strategic reserve would be fully operational within about one year. However, rapid deployment itself would be achieved only if Member States were able to place troops and police on the ground in a timely fashion.

59. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related reports of the Advisory Committee (A/56/887 and Add.1-10 and A/56/902), said that they contained extensive comments and recommendations specific to each mission. Comments and recommendations of wider application could be found in the Advisory Committee's general report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/56/887). Subject to certain specific comments, the Advisory Committee had accepted the recommendations of the Secretary-General on UNDOF, UNIFIL, UNIKOM, UNFICYP and UNMEE. With respect to UNAMSIL, it had accepted the proposals of the Secretary-General with a slight modification: it had accepted the amount of $669.5 million gross for the appropriation, but in view of the possible effects of the adjustment which might be implemented, it was recommending an assessment of $502,107,300 for the period from 1 July 2002 to 31 March 2003. The Advisory Committee was recommending an assessment of $330 million for UNMIK, where political developments had created the potential for downsizing.

60. Paragraphs 76-83 of its report (A/56/887) commented on the performance reports of closed missions. Annex VII to the report contained budgetary data on those missions. His own review of the performance reports showed that the Secretary-General was reporting balances totalling $279.3 million, of which $228.7 million related to missions in the former Yugoslavia. The Secretary-General had proposed that $179,656,000 should be available for strategic deployment stocks for the two missions concerned, but the Advisory Committee had recommended a figure of $146.2 million. Compared to the $16.2 million proposed by the Secretary-General for the Logistics Base at Brindisi, the Advisory Committee was recommending an amount of $14,293,200; it was also recommending 24 additional posts out of the 80 proposed by the Secretary-General. For UNOMIG, the Advisory Committee had recommended an amount of $31,705,800 compared with the Secretary-General's proposed amount of $35,535,300. The Advisory Committee's recommendation took into account its comments concerning air operations and additional staff.

61. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that the Group of 77 would be making a detailed statement on the items under consideration. On the question of strategic deployment stocks, however, he would welcome information regarding the management of high-technology stocks whose value had plunged.

62. **Mr. Sheehan** (Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support) said that considerable caution was exercised in the stockpiling and management of communications and information technology equipment. In order to keep stockpiles fresh, equipment and vehicles were rotated to missions in an efficient manner.

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Audit of the policies and procedures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for recruiting international civilian staff for field missions (A/56/202)

Audit of the establishment and management of mission subsistence allowance rates (A/56/648)

Update on the status of the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on mission liquidation activities at the United Nations (A/56/896)

Update of oversight activities concerning the oil-for-food programme and the United Nations Compensation Commission (A/56/903)

63. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the audit of the policies and procedures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for recruiting international civilian staff for field missions (A/56/202), said that the audit had been conducted at a time when peacekeeping operations, in all their aspects, were under comprehensive review. The main objectives of the OIOS review were to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies and procedures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for recruiting mission staff and to suggest improvements to ensure that the staffing needs of field missions were better served.

64. The review had found shortcomings in the recruitment process as well as in the management of recruitment functions by the Department. The absence of benchmarks and reliable workload indicators affected the Department's ability to realistically assess its resource requirements. Job descriptions for mission posts had not yet been developed and the Department did not have a functional candidate roster. Furthermore, the selection process did not ensure that candidates were selected on a competitive basis and field missions were not fully involved in the process. The report advocated full delegation of recruitment authority to field missions, but emphasized the need for establishing recruitment standards, deploying qualified recruitment specialists in the affected missions and establishing effective monitoring mechanisms at Headquarters. All 16 of the OIOS recommendations had been accepted and the Department, working in close cooperation with the Office of Human Resources Management, had initiated action to implement them.

65. Introducing the report of OIOS on the audit of the establishment and management of mission subsistence allowance (MSA) rates (A/56/648), he said that the objective of the audit was to determine whether the MSA rates established for special peacekeeping missions were reasonable and justified. The audit had also reviewed the administration of MSA payments which constituted a significant portion of overall peacekeeping costs. For the financial period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, such payments had accounted for 17 per cent of the total expenditure budget of the 10 special peacekeeping missions reviewed by OIOS and obviously represented a high level of audit risk to OIOS and the United Nations.

66. The purpose of MSA was to reimburse United Nations staff members for subsistence costs during periods of mission service. The Secretary-General set the rates and conditions for MSA payments on each such assignment. In general, the MSA rate should reflect the subsistence costs, including food, lodging and incidental items, based on the conditions in each mission area. MSA rates should generally be lower than the daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates established by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for short-term travel to the same locations. MSA rates were subject to review on a regular basis in order to verify that the various elements taken into account in establishing the initial rates were still valid. In recent years, MSA had been paid to a wide variety of staff, including not only international civilian personnel but also military observers and civilian police personnel serving in special missions.

67. Incorporation into the MSA of a hardship component unrelated to subsistence was not proper, since compensation for hardship or hazard should be considered separately. OIOS had no objection to separate entitlements designed specifically to address the hardship and hazards of mission service, provided they were justified and were reviewed independently of MSA.

68. In seven of the missions reviewed, namely, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), UNAMSIL, UNOMIG, UNMEE, UNMIK and UNIKOM, the MSA rates in effect were considered to be excessive or otherwise questionable. In one mission, UNMIBH, the rate appeared to be unduly low compared with the DSA rate in effect at the same duty station. In the two remaining missions, UNMOP and UNTAET, MSA rates appeared to be reasonable.

69. In view of the significant potential financial implications, OIOS had expressed the opinion that the Office of Human Resources Management needed to conduct an immediate review of the seven missions for which MSA rates were considered excessive or questionable to confirm whether any adjustments were

required. In response to the audit's findings and recommendations, the Office of Human Resources Management had reviewed the rates for UNMEE, UNOMIG, MINURSO, MONUC, UNAMSIL and UNIKOM and had decided to reduce them, resulting in projected savings of approximately $33.7 million per year. The Office of Human Resources Management had also decided that the MSA for UNMIBH warranted review and a decision on whether to revise the rate was being finalized. OIOS considered it appropriate that any reductions in MSA rates should be implemented in a phased manner to allow staff sufficient time to make adjustments to their living expenditure patterns.

70. Introducing the note by OIOS updating the status of its recommendations on mission liquidation activities at the United Nations (A/56/896), he said that the OIOS internal audit of mission liquidation activities at Headquarters had shown that, while a number of improvements had been made in the liquidation of peacekeeping missions, the planning and execution of residual tasks at Headquarters needed to be further improved and more closely monitored in order to speed up the liquidation process. Monitoring of liquidation activities by the Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations also needed to be strengthened.

71. OIOS had made 13 recommendations to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Controller aimed at improving mission liquidation activities. The recommendations and their implementation status, as reported by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, were summarized in the annex to the note by OIOS (A/56/896). As part of its ongoing audit of the Finance Management and Support Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, OIOS had decided to undertake a follow-up review of mission liquidation activities, paying particular attention to write-offs. The results of that review would be reported to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

72. Turning, lastly, to the report of OIOS on the update of oversight activities concerning the oil-for-food programme and the United Nations Compensation Commission (A/56/903), he noted that the complex nature of its activities combined with the large amounts of funds involved and the wide range of United Nations responsibilities made the programme a high-risk undertaking that required special audit arrangements. It was therefore essential for OIOS to be provided with adequate resources and for appropriate arrangements to be put in place to ensure effective audit coverage of the funds for which the Organization was responsible.

73. The report set out the OIOS strategy for auditing the large number of activities being financed from the oil-for-food programme. Emphasis was placed on the audit of activities in northern Iraq, where the United Nations was itself implementing the oil-for-food activities. OIOS had conducted a number of audits of the United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq and in particular its coordination and monitoring function in northern Iraq. It was also coordinating audit activities with the audit bodies of the nine other United Nations organizations involved in implementing the programme in northern Iraq. While that represented a major challenge, steps had been taken to strengthen cooperation in a number of areas, including plans to conduct horizontal and joint audits of the activities in northern Iraq.

74. While OIOS acknowledged the often difficult conditions under which the activities in Iraq were being implemented, there was a continuing need for the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq to focus on the coordination and monitoring of programme activities in northern Iraq. For its part, the United Nations Compensation Commission was responsible for the processing of a large number of claims resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The high value and often complex nature of those claims entailed significant risks to the Organization and, while the Commission had built in a number of safeguards, there was nonetheless ample opportunity for mistakes and irregularities to occur. The Executive Secretary had agreed with OIOS on that issue and a second auditor post had been created to focus on high-risk claim areas.

75. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that the reports of OIOS were very informative and the recommendations they contained should be implemented as expeditiously as possible. He was concerned at the slow pace of implementation of the 13 recommendations of OIOS on mission liquidation activities and wondered whether there were any complicating factors. His delegation shared the views of OIOS on the standard for establishing and adjusting MSA rates. Other considerations should not be taken into account in the calculation of MSA. The Secretary-General should implement the recommendations of OIOS for improving the establishment and management of MSA

in peacekeeping missions, particularly since those allowances accounted for a high proportion of mission budgets. His delegation also urged the prompt implementation of the recommendations of OIOS aimed at strengthening the process of recruiting international civilian staff for field missions. In that connection, he wondered whether some of the issues raised in the report of OIOS were related to the high vacancy rate of 29 per cent at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi.

76. With regard to the report of OIOS on the update of oversight activities concerning the oil-for-food programme (A/56/903), he would welcome further elaboration of the comments made by the Under-Secretary-General on the coordination of audit activities with the audit bodies of other United Nations organizations involved in the programme. As for the oversight activities of the United Nations Compensation Commission, he shared the view of OIOS that the high value and often complex nature of claims resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait entailed significant risks to the Organization and asked whether the creation of a second auditor post to focus on high-risk claim areas had been approved.

77. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), replying to the questions raised, said that, while OIOS was always pleased to see improvements in the pace of mission liquidation activities, it recognized that mission liquidation was a lengthy process and would await the completion of an in-depth review before passing judgement. He welcomed the new sense of urgency with which the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was now approaching its mission liquidation activities.

78. The policies and procedures of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for recruiting international civilian staff for field missions, which were still not as efficient as they should be, were now being monitored by the Office of Human Resources Management and OIOS hoped that the new initiatives that had been taken, such as the design of a roster (the "Galaxy project") that could receive applications online, screen them and automatically rank candidates in accordance with job requirements, together with implementation of the recommendations that it had made to the Field Administration and Logistics Division, would strengthen the recruitment process and reduce vacancy rates. OIOS would continue its review of the recruitment process and would address any outstanding issues upon completion of the review.

79. On the question of the coordination of audit activities with other audit bodies, OIOS had learnt many useful lessons from its initiative, which it planned to continue. He would give an update on the collaboration at a later stage. The second auditor post was the minimum needed to fulfil mandated tasks and he hoped that the recommendation would be approved.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

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Summary record of the 55th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 15 May 2002, at 10 a.m.

Chairman Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/56/L.61/Rev.1)

1. **Mr. Pulido** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the proposed programme of work reflected a relatively balanced allocation of time, with priority being accorded to time-bound items. However, the Bureau should ensure availability of conference services for an additional week, if necessary.

2. The late issuance of documentation was a serious impediment to the work of the Fifth and other Main Committees and the issue should be seriously addressed under the relevant agenda item. The Secretariat must comply with the six-week rule for the issuance of documents so as to give all delegations an opportunity to review them prior to their consideration.

3. The Group was also concerned that proposals were being made with utter disregard for established rules of procedure. It was particularly important to ensure simultaneous distribution of draft resolutions and decisions in all the official languages prior to their adoption.

4. Concerning specific items, in particular human resources management and administration of justice, the Secretariat should provide an explanation in formal meeting for the continuing delay in the publication of several reports requested in General Assembly resolution 55/258 and explain the relationship between the administrative instructions on the issue and the provisions of that resolution. It should also indicate why several reports that had in fact been issued had nevertheless been included in the list proposed for postponement. Specifically, the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 56/242 should be made available without delay.

5. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that her delegation would like to receive replies to the questions that had been asked by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, particularly on the issues of conference services at Nairobi and contingent-owned equipment.

6. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had not taken up the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the provisions of resolution 56/242 on pattern of conferences (A/56/919), as the report did not contain budgetary recommendations on which the Advisory Committee was required to report immediately to the Fifth Committee. He had already provided an explanation to the Group of 77 and China as to why the Advisory Committee did not consider it necessary to report to the Fifth Committee at the current juncture.

7. In his report, the Secretary-General had indicated that services for meetings of regional and other major groupings might be reduced. At the current stage, however, the Advisory Committee could not advise the Fifth Committee on how to proceed on the implementation of the budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The most appropriate way would be to carry out the programming exercise in the context of the performance report to be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. It was also necessary to systematically identify the effect that reductions were having on the number of mandated meetings and other activities before pronouncing on a course of action. That information had not been provided in the report of the Secretary-General.

8. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that the Group of 77 and China had made a specific request that the Advisory Committee's report on document A/56/919 should be issued for consideration at the current part of the resumed session. The issues in question were fully within the competence of the Fifth Committee and the Secretariat should provide an explanation for the various reports that were still not available. The Group of 77 and China was concerned about the tendency to postpone the consideration of issues on which reports had not been issued on time.

9. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he had no wish to engage in a dialogue on the matter as he did not want the Advisory Committee to become the issue. The problem was the arbitrary manner in which the proposed reductions had been handled during the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly. A statement of programme budget implications should have been prepared on the basis of which the Advisory Committee would have been able to make recommendations to the Fifth Committee before that Committee took a final decision. That had not been done and the issue had now become a political

one. The report of the Secretary-General concerned the effect of the reductions on the ability of Member States to pursue their diplomatic dialogue. There was no way for the Advisory Committee to make specific recommendations concerning reductions, since the Secretary-General had made no proposals in his report and had merely taken note of the proposals of the General Assembly. If the Advisory Committee was requested to review the Secretary-General's report, he doubted that it would be able to report back before the end of the current part of the resumed session or that the report would be more informative than the statement he was now making. To be pragmatic, the only way to address the issue was in the context of the performance report.

10. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that the question being raised by her delegation was a procedural one. As a subsidiary body of the Assembly, the Advisory Committee should be guided by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The opinions of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee were personal and preliminary inasmuch as the Fifth Committee had not been made aware of the debate that had taken place within the Advisory Committee, even though the Group of 77 and China had formally requested the Advisory Committee to report its opinions on document A/56/919. It was for the General Assembly to evaluate the results of the budget resolution and she agreed with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the decision was now a political one.

11. **The Chairman** recalled his earlier statement that the Advisory Committee would have no time to comment on the documents that were still to be submitted by the Secretariat and their consideration should therefore be deferred to the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work for the second part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, on the understanding that adjustments would be made as necessary during the course of the session.

12. *It was so decided.*

13. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that it was important for the Committee to take up reports such as those concerning contingent-owned equipment and conference services at the Nairobi Office and the possibility should be considered of making conference services available for an additional week during the current part of the resumed session so that consideration of those issues would not have to be deferred.

14. **The Chairman** said that the Bureau would discuss the matter.

Standardization of the format of resolutions on peacekeeping operations

15. **The Chairman** said that the idea behind standardizing the format of resolutions on the financing of peacekeeping operations was to streamline the work of the Committee. He had been informed, however, that, even though many delegations felt that it was a good idea, there was a general preference for the matter to be postponed for further consideration during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Accordingly, the matter would not be considered further during the current session.

16. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 120: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*)

17. **The Chairman** said that, in the absence of further comments, he took it that the Committee had thus concluded its general discussion on the item.

18. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (*continued*) (A/56/813, A/56/832 and Add.1 and A/56/887/Add.8)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/56/822, A/56/887/Add.7 and A/56/893)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*) (A/56/763, A/56/802 and A/56/887/Add.6)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*) (A/56/840, A/56/862 and A/56/887/Add.9)

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(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (*continued*) (A/56/794, A/56/820 and A/56/887/Add.5)

Agenda item 141: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/56/833, A/56/855 and A/56/887/Add.3)

Agenda item 144: Financing of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (*continued*) (A/56/842)

Agenda item 146: Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters (*continued*) (A/56/852)

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Agenda item 151: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (*continued*) (A/56/851)

Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*continued*) (A/56/698, A/56/773 and A/56/887/Add.2)

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Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/56/870, A/56/887/Add.1-9 and A/56/902)

19. **The Chairman** invited the Committee to resume its consideration of the items relating to the financing of 13 United Nations peacekeeping operations and of the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (UNLB) and the concept of strategic deployment stocks, which were submitted under agenda item 133.

20. **Mr. Soto** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland and Norway, expressed concern at the late issuance of many reports, which had limited the time available for delegations to study them. There was need in that regard for better compliance by the Secretariat with existing rules.

21. United Nations peacekeeping was a core function of the Organization and an activity that was demonstrably important to the international community. The European Union commended all those who risked their lives every day to create a more peaceful and secure world. The 6,000 troops, civilian police and other personnel it contributed to peacekeeping missions, its more than 40 per cent share in the financing of the peacekeeping budget and its contribution to the training of peacekeeping personnel were further testament of the European Union's commitment to that effort. Because the maintenance of peace and security was such a challenging and crucial task, it was essential for the budgets of peacekeeping operations to be prepared in an efficient and cost-effective manner and for the Secretariat to be given the resources to carry out the mandates of Member States. In that connection, forecasting was crucial in order to allow Member States to properly estimate resource requirements at an early stage. The European Union wished to reiterate its call for a presentation to be made by the Secretariat early in the year that would outline trends in expected expenditure for peacekeeping operations beyond the subsequent financial year. It recognized, however, that that was no easy task and, in the meantime, more regular information on peacekeeping expenditures would be very helpful.

22. Longer-term planning for the financial and administrative aspects of peacekeeping operations must take into account the need for each mission to have an exit strategy. Where appropriate, the mandates of peacekeeping operations should also be aligned with the peacekeeping financial calendar in order to ease the bureaucratic burden placed on the Secretariat and Member States in carrying out multiple assessments and forecasting for mission mandates outside the peacekeeping financial year.

23. On the question of strategic deployment stocks, Member States had already approved the concept and must now agree on the most appropriate way of financing such stocks. The European Union stood ready to discuss the Secretary-General's proposal to finance them from the unencumbered balances of closed missions and supported his proposal for pre-mandate commitment authority, since it was important for logistical planning to begin at an early stage before the mandate was approved by the Security Council. There was no need to change the financial regulations and rules if the Secretary-General had the means within the existing rules to request pre-mandate commitment authority.

24. With regard to the management of peacekeeping operations, the European Union was concerned at the failure to address certain inadequacies. It saw little or no value, for example, in the establishment of separate special units in some established missions, where there was little justification for the posts requested. Where there were large numbers of continuing vacancies, posts should not be retained for long periods when it was clear that missions could function well enough without the posts being filled. The European Union would therefore like to see a review of the structure of the civilian component of peacekeeping missions.

25. Other areas of concern included mission subsistence allowance (MSA), which should reflect actual living costs in the mission area. Elements of hardship compensation should not be included in MSA. Out of concern that the Organization should perform its peacekeeping functions with only those resources that were required to do the job, the European Union would welcome a review of the standard staff ratios applied to peacekeeping operations, bearing in mind the impact of information technology and improvements in staff training and development. On the question of reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment and self-sustainment, the European Union agreed with the Advisory Committee's conclusion that an effective procedure should be put in place for ascertaining the capacity of troop-contributing countries to meet established requirements. The whole system of verification should be strengthened, moreover, to uncover non-compliance with memorandums of understanding. In particular, arrival inspections on major equipment should be carried out for all contingents.

26. The European Union shared the Advisory Committee's concern that the Organization had been forced to start some mission operations without having first signed the respective status-of-forces agreements. That had led in some cases to the unacceptable situation of heavy expenditures being incurred in duties and taxes. The late signature of memorandums of understanding could also affect the Organization's liability for air transport, particularly in case of accident or injury. The European Union expected those issues to be addressed in the context of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi report) (A/55/305).

27. The European Union was also deeply concerned at the lack of consistent criteria for the procurement of aircraft services, which had become the third largest component of expenditure. A comprehensive strategy should take into account the existence of synergies and the need for further collaboration between the different missions and other United Nations organizations. The European Union was of the opinion that, before services were contracted for the provision of executive jets, it should be clear that no commercial transportation alternatives for official purposes or medical evacuation were available.

28. The progress made in introducing results-based objectives in the budget for the support account for the biennium 2002-2003 was very encouraging. Objective-setting, monitoring and effective evaluation should improve planning. The European Union welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to conduct workshops in results-based budgeting for budget officers working in peacekeeping and looked forward to the implementation of results-based budgeting in the budget submissions for the period from 1 July to 30 June 2004. The budgets of peacekeeping operations should also address the need for a gender-sensitive approach, the cost of which should be included in the budget proposals for peacekeeping missions.

29. The weaknesses that had been identified in the liquidation process for peacekeeping operations were unacceptable and the European Union would welcome an update on the situation in all missions in liquidation and on the Secretariat's proposals for reforming the process.

30. On the subject of staff training, while the European Union was supportive of training in general, training seemed to lack a strategic plan that took into consideration the core needs of staff and the relevance of training to mission requirements. There was need for balance between what was necessary for staff development and the needs of the Organization. The Secretariat should provide a detailed explanation of how it intended to deal with that issue.

31. The lack of planning and adequate training of staff in procurement and inventory management, an area that accounted for large investments by the Organization, continued to give cause for concern. It should be possible to achieve better control of United Nations property in peacekeeping missions through the use of the field assets control system that was now operational in all peacekeeping missions. The European Union would welcome information on the action taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy that integrated the information and communication technology strategies of field missions and the Secretariat.

32. The topic of strategic deployment stocks would be one of the most important to be taken up at the current session. The lack of a rapid deployment capability had been repeatedly identified as a major weakness in United Nations peacekeeping. The implementation of strategic deployment stocks was therefore a crucial development and every effort should be made to ensure the high quality and effective maintenance of the stocks. Before purchases were made, it would also be useful to revise the standard costs of the technical components of the stock.

33. **Mr. Duval** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, expressed satisfaction at the improving financial situation of the Organization and urged all Member States to pay their contributions on time, in full and without conditions.

34. The reform process initiated by the Brahimi report had resulted in significant improvements in the Organization's peacekeeping capabilities both at Headquarters and in the field. Efforts should now focus on reform measures that had yet to be implemented, including the establishment of strategic deployment stocks at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (UNLB), which were vital to the improvement of rapid deployment. Establishing strategic deployment stocks for one complex mission was a prudent, realistic and economical approach at the current juncture. He supported the Secretariat's proposal for financing the initiative and agreed with the Advisory Committee that pre-mandate commitment authority could be achieved under current arrangements. Given the scope of the initiative, however, care must be taken in establishing and managing the stocks. While the Secretariat's replenishment and rotation policies were sound, adequate inventory management and control of the stocks at UNLB remained vital. The strategic deployment stocks, together with the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund, would double the resources currently available for establishing new missions and it might therefore be appropriate to review the conditions for use of the Fund.

35. Improvements in the management of the $2.6 billion peacekeeping budget were also in order. Clearly, much remained to be done to increase the productivity and efficiency of such activities as assets management, procurement, transport and communication. He shared the Advisory Committee's conclusion that the Organization's ability to manage missions in transition needed to be strengthened and hoped that that Committee's proposals would be taken on board by the Secretariat.

36. The Secretariat was to be congratulated on its first attempt at applying results-based budgeting. He, however, regretted the absence of a results-based narrative in the report of the Secretary-General on the concept of strategic deployment stocks and its implementation (A/56/870).

37. In keeping with the objectives of results-based budgeting, there was considerable opportunity for improving the way the United Nations managed, budgeted for, and financed peacekeeping operations, since the current process was labour-intensive, unduly complicated and highly bureaucratic. Examining the question of consolidating assessments to improve the ability of Member States to budget for and pay their assessments would be a good first step. Improving information flow and having a predictable or scheduled

time line for assessments would also be invaluable in helping Member States meet payment deadlines.

38. The sheer volume of reporting weighed heavily on the Secretariat and Member States alike, and should be streamlined. During the current part of the resumed session, some 78 reports were due to be considered on peacekeeping management and peacekeeping operations.

39. The financial framework supporting peacekeeping was also cumbersome, causing many missions to experience negative cash balances despite the Organization's healthy aggregate peacekeeping cash flow. A more flexible system that integrated peacekeeping budgets should therefore be considered.

40. **Mr. Kennedy** (United States of America) agreed with the Chairman that all delegations should commit themselves to completing the Committee's work within the allocated time frame. Many issues were not new, and the Committee should be particularly sensitive to the importance of conserving the Organization's precious financial resources.

41. His delegation was disappointed that certain reports were not yet ready for consideration. It was, however, aware of the increasing number of reports that the Secretariat was required to prepare at the request of Member States, in addition to the 41 reports on current and recently closed missions.

42. Peacekeeping was one of the key functions of the Organization and had one of the largest collective budgets in the United Nations system. The Committee was thus especially challenged to ensure that the funds contributed by Member States were used to maximum benefit. Results-based budgeting was key to the evaluation of mission performance and an effective management tool for the Administration. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's observation that rational and achievable objectives should form the core of results-based budgetary requests.

43. It would also be examining circumstances in which mission subsistence allowance (MSA) rates were higher than appeared necessary, given local conditions, and the steps being taken to ensure that payments were made at the appropriate level. It was incumbent on the Secretariat to ensure that the personnel of all missions were treated fairly and equally. His delegation could not support unique benefits without a pressing, demonstrated case that mission performance had suffered and would continue to suffer without a particular benefit.

44. It was a matter of concern that many missions continued to have excessive unobligated balances, which was reason enough for a detailed review of budgeting practices. At the same time, problems with reimbursements to Member States persisted and were not always related to shortages of funds. The lack of memorandums of understanding and agreements with troop contributors was also a major concern, and the Secretariat should work with affected countries to remedy the situation as soon as possible.

45. His delegation was also concerned at reports that pre-arrival and operational reviews and inspections were not being performed in a timely manner and that there were frequent discrepancies between Headquarters' assumptions concerning staffing on the ground and the reports of heads of mission. Such discrepancies could lead to delays in payments to troop contributors and conceal problems that needed to be remedied before full operational capacity could be reached. The time required for mission liquidation activities could also be shortened and suggestions in that regard from the Secretariat would be appreciated.

46. The large budgets and high operational risks related to peacekeeping made effective oversight imperative. The Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) should therefore be commended for providing that critical service. His delegation would welcome information on the status of the proposal of OIOS to strengthen oversight through the placement of additional resident staff in large missions.

47. His delegation took note of the Secretariat's detailed proposals for strategic deployment stocks to be located at UNLB, and supported the concept of a single large mission plan for the initial stock. The original intention of the plan had been to procure big-ticket or long lead time articles, and his delegation was therefore examining the proposed stock lists to ensure that those extraordinary items received the bulk of any special funding. His delegation also supported the use of existing cash balances to fund the first stage of procurement, so that the Secretariat could begin to work immediately to make the strategic deployment stocks a reality, rather than having to wait a year or more while funds were assessed and collected.

48. The reports of exploitation of women and children by peacekeepers and other international personnel were also a cause for concern. All steps must be taken to investigate all such reports and to implement strong safeguards to prevent future occurrences.

49. **Mr. Gatilov** (Russian Federation) said that establishment of the strategic deployment stocks, which had received the general endorsement of Member States, was one of the most important elements for strengthening the potential for rapid and effective deployment. It was necessary to focus on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the proposal.

50. Certain issues deserved particular attention, including the number of missions for which the stocks were to be established. His delegation supported the view that, for the time being, the number should be limited to the deployment of one complex mission, and the lessons learned from that first experience. The Committee had been informed that expenditures for the establishment of one such complex mission would amount to some $146.2 million. His delegation welcomed the fact that the Secretariat agreed in principle with the Advisory Committee's recommendations in that regard. It also shared the Advisory Committee's view that clear-cut and realistic policies were required for the replacement and rotation of components, particularly expensive equipment and computers. There was also need for transparent and effective rules of financial accounting between UNLB and the missions.

51. The Secretariat should also focus on reaching agreement with Member States on the provision of specialized equipment, materiel and services. It was important to ensure the direct involvement of States, rather than commercial enterprises, and to enter into economical storage and equipment-servicing arrangements.

52. With regard to the granting of pre-commitment authority to the Secretary-General, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's opinion that existing resolutions already gave the Secretary-General sufficient financial authority to commence planning and deployment prior to the establishment of a new mission by the Security Council. A letter from the President of the Security Council clearly endorsing the Secretary-General's intention to establish a given operation could be seen as a decision to trigger deployment. His delegation therefore supported the proposal to approve the concept of strategic deployment stocks, but considered that the proposal on financing needed further discussion.

53. **Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan) said that the establishment of new missions and expansion of mandates had made it all the more important to strengthen the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and in particular to improve rapid deployment capabilities. The amount of $2.9 billion that had been proposed for peacekeeping for the period from July 2002 to June 2003 still represented a high level of funding. His delegation wished to reiterate the importance of adhering to General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994. It also wished to encourage the Secretariat to continue to improve its budget proposals.

54. The size of the strategic deployment stocks should be based on assessed needs. It was also more realistic to use the planning assumption that one complex mission would be deployed per year. He recalled that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had reached the same conclusion. The establishment of strategic deployment stocks would also alleviate the delay in deploying some peacekeeping missions, particularly in Africa.

55. His delegation had noted with interest that in order to enhance material readiness for new missions, goods and commodities would be pre-positioned at UNLB, and services would be provided using pre-mandate commitment authority. His delegation also agreed that a letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General would constitute a decision sufficient to trigger the resolutions mentioned by the previous speaker.

56. To manage and maintain strategic deployment stocks, all available facilities at UNLB should be efficiently utilized. Post requirements in that connection should accordingly be closely examined. The opinions and recommendations contained in the reports of the Advisory Committee constituted a sound basis for more detailed discussions on strategic deployment stocks and pre-mandated commitment authority, as well as the UNLB budget.

57. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/56/832 and Add.1 should not be read in isolation from the original report that had been issued pursuant

to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 55/264. Though two years late, the current report and the proposals it contained were welcome.

58. The dialogue between the Secretariat and the local staff of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) should be ongoing and should take into account all the concerns expressed by the staff. Through the annual report on the financing of the Force, the General Assembly should be kept informed of the outcome of that dialogue and the manner in which those concerns were addressed.

59. His delegation was eager to see good work on the part of both local and international staff, for which good working conditions, including the replacement of infrastructure in accordance with the three-year master plan, were required. The Secretariat should provide further information on its compliance with the request contained in paragraph 20 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/887/Add.8). His delegation also approved the establishment of the three proposed international posts.

60. The report of the Secretary-General gave rise to a number of questions. He wished to know the purpose of the integration between UNDOF operations and the operations of the Observer Group Golan of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization referred to under Objective 3 in section X of the report. He would also like clarification of the statement in paragraph 25 that "for operational reasons, it has been concluded that no conversion of General Service staff posts into local staff posts is possible at this time", notwithstanding the General Assembly's request in paragraph 14 of its resolution 55/264 that the Secretary-General should continue "efforts to recruit local staff for the Force against General Service posts". The representatives of the Secretariat should indicate what criteria were followed in assigning local staff to work in other missions. His delegation regretted the absence of any discussion of the question of the transfer of local staff in the Secretary-General's report.

61. Lastly, his delegation wondered whether the recommendation contained in paragraph 25 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/887/Add.8) should not be amended to more accurately reflect the oral statement by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the Committee agreed with the financial implications of the peacekeeping operations covered in a number of reports of the Secretary-General, including his report on UNDOF. With regard to the financing of UNDOF, the Fifth Committee should approve the financial implications indicated in the relevant reports of the Secretary-General (A/56/832 and Add.1).

62. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico), referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the concept of strategic deployment stocks (A/56/870), said that the best peacekeeping operations were not necessarily the largest but the most timely. A United Nations presence in a conflict area could mean the difference between life and death for many. His delegation therefore supported the concept of strategic deployment stocks. The Secretary-General's proposal essentially had to do with administrative and budgetary matters, and would not give him authorization to deploy troops without a mandate from the Security Council.

63. Regarding the role of the Security Council, if the recommendations in the report were adopted, his delegation would like to know what treatment would be given to the resources utilized by the Secretary-General in the event that the Security Council at the last moment did not adopt a resolution authorizing deployment of a mission. It understood that, in conformity with the Charter, Member States were required to comply with Security Council decisions, in particular those taken pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter, including assessments for their financing. In such cases, Security Council resolutions provided the legal justification for requesting resources from the Governments of Member States. Therefore, his delegation would like clarification of the procedures to be followed if events did not permit the proposed mechanism to operate.

64. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that India had always been a strong supporter of United Nations peacekeeping. As such, it was committed to ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources were provided for that function and that an effective administrative and financial structure was put in place for managing peacekeeping operations.

65. The concept of strategic deployment stocks was one of the most important issues before the Committee, for it was vital that the Organization should acquire the rapid deployment capability it had lacked in the past. He was pleased to note that the Administration had accepted the two main conclusions in the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/902), namely, that coverage for one complex mission would subsume

provision for a traditional mission and, in connection with the additional financial commitment authority sought, that the actions envisaged by the Secretary-General in paragraph 35 of document A/56/870 would fall within the scope of the "start-up phase" referred to in General Assembly resolution 49/233 A, section IV, paragraph 1. He agreed with the Advisory Committee that the approach used in the context of the establishment of the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund might also be applied to the financing of strategic deployment stocks.

66. With regard to the proposed 80.1 per cent increase in total gross resources for UNLB, which included additional post as well as non-post resources, there was a need to consider whether the 29 per cent vacancy rate among international staff might be attributable, at least in part, to the non-application of the post-adjustment factor to the base salary of staff at UNLB.

67. His delegation concurred with the view expressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services in his statement at the Committee's 54th meeting that MSA was intended to respond to the operational demands of missions in the field. It regretted, however, that the Under-Secretary-General had not taken cognizance in his comments on MSA of the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

68. Regarding contingent-owned equipment, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the management of arrangements in the field and at Headquarters required priority attention to remedy serious flaws in the system and that emphasis should be placed on pre-arrival and operational inspections. He noted that the post-Phase V Working Group on reformed procedures for determining reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment had made far-reaching conclusions and recommendations in that regard, which had since been approved by the General Assembly. He asked how the Secretariat intended to implement the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning the need for improved arrangements for reimbursement, particularly with a view to assisting troop contributors from developing countries, and why it had not been possible to issue all the reports on matters relating to contingent-owned equipment and troop costs in time for their consideration by the Committee at the second part of the resumed fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

69. Lastly, he expressed satisfaction at the encouraging start made by the Secretariat in the transition to a system of results-based budgeting for the support account for peacekeeping operations.

70. **Ms. Wang** Xuixia (China) said that, like previous speakers, she was concerned about the delays in the issuance of documentation; the Secretariat should take steps to address that problem. She agreed that the budgeting process could be further streamlined and that it was important to address in mission budgets the need for a gender-sensitive approach. In that connection, her delegation urged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to take the principle of gender balance into account in the recruitment of staff.

71. With regard to strategic deployment stocks, her delegation was ready to support any measure that would facilitate rapid deployment and ensure the rational allocation of assets and was keen to consider the proposal further. In particular, it would like to hear more about the experience of missions, including the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), which had pre-positioned stocks at UNLB.

72. She noted that, whereas the proposed staffing requirements for UNLB provided for 47 new posts relating to strategic deployment stocks, the Advisory Committee had recommended the establishment of only 20 new posts. Since the Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support had assured the Committee that the strategic deployment stocks concept could be implemented with the staffing level approved by the Advisory Committee, she wondered on what basis the Secretary-General's original proposals had been made. She concurred with the Advisory Committee that the Administration should have adhered to the established budget practice for the presentation of posts; it was confusing to present requests for the reclassification of existing posts as requests for new posts. The Administration must be prepared to contemplate downward as well as upward reclassifications, since staffing levels should reflect actual conditions and requirements.

73. According to the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/902), the budgetary requirements for strategic deployment stocks for one complex mission would amount to $146.2 million, which would represent a one-time cost. It was not clear to her how that figure had been arrived at or how the long-term

costs of storing and replenishing the stocks would be met. Regarding the procurement of the stocks, the most important criteria would be quality and cost-effectiveness. The procurement process would have to be transparent and the principle of equitable geographical distribution would have to be taken into account.

74. **Mr. Mladenovic** (Yugoslavia), commenting on the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (A/56/802) and the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/887/Add.6), said that his delegation fully supported the budget proposal for the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003.

75. The provisional institutions of self-government established following the elections held in Kosovo and Metohija would assume part of the responsibility for the functioning of the province. Nonetheless, UNMIK would continue to bear the major share of responsibility in important segments of its administration, for which appropriate financial resources must be provided. That was especially important, considering that the security situation in those areas remained grave and that one of the short-term priorities was the return of internally displaced persons, including Serbs and other non-Albanians, to the province.

76. If the proposed reduction in resources was approved, it should not be allowed to jeopardize in any way the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the obligations of UNMIK. Particular attention should be paid to the recommendations concerning priorities in the retention of staff contained in the report of the Advisory Committee.

77. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) welcomed the positive comments made regarding the introduction of results-based objectives in the budgets of the peacekeeping operations for 2002/2003. There remained room for improvement, and he therefore looked forward to exploring the issue further with delegations.

78. With regard to the concept of strategic deployment stocks, it was the opinion of the Advisory Committee that there was no need to provide any additional commitment authority, since a letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General expressing concurrence with his intention to plan and prepare for a possible new mission would constitute a decision sufficient to trigger the implementation of either paragraph 3 of the resolutions on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses or General Assembly resolution 49/233 A. Should the Council ultimately decide not to approve the mission, the stocks purchased would be redeployed to existing missions and the expenditures incurred prorated among them. That scenario was unlikely, however, since the drafting of a letter by the President of the Council would require the agreement of the membership. He concurred with the representative of Canada that, if the concept of strategic deployment stocks was approved, there would be a need to review the conditions for the use of the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund.

79. Attempts were being made to streamline the process of budgeting for peacekeeping, and the Secretariat was considering the alignment of the mandates of peacekeeping operations with the peacekeeping financial calendar. He agreed that it would be desirable to forecast expenditure for missions beyond the subsequent financial year. However, the Secretariat lacked the necessary information to project that far ahead.

80. Lastly, with regard to the problem of late issuance of documentation, he recalled that it had not been possible to finalize and submit at the second part of the resumed fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, in May 2001, the proposed budgets for five peacekeeping missions for 2001-2002. Those budgets had finally been submitted in the autumn of 2001. As a result, the Secretariat had fallen behind in the preparation of the reports scheduled for consideration at the second part of the resumed fifty-sixth session, including some reports on contingent-owned equipment and troop costs, which were now to be considered at the fifty-seventh session. Currently, three of the reports were in reproduction and one had been issued. He noted that attempts were being made to reduce the overall number of reports and to make individual reports more readable and focused.

81. **Mr. Sheehan** (Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support) said that there was need for a more extensive dialogue between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Member States, particularly troop contributors, in order to address the core issues of peacekeeping. He noted that, while the mandates of new peacekeeping missions continued to expand, the pool of countries that contributed troops was shrinking and fewer contingents were fully self-

sustaining, which meant that the Secretariat was increasingly being called on to fill the gaps and many expert staff were being seconded from Headquarters to respond to crises in the field. As a result, the capacity of the Secretariat to implement the changes sought by Member States and to undertake long-term planning was compromised.

82. With regard to strategic deployment stocks, he pointed out that the Advisory Committee had recommended the establishment of eight new posts for international staff, which was close to the number requested by the Secretary-General. While the 12 new posts approved for local staff represented a significant reduction, the Advisory Committee had acknowledged the need for contractual staff to cope with surge periods. As to the cost of establishing the stocks, the figure of $146.2 million had been arrived at based on the assumption that coverage for a traditional mission could be subsumed within the provision for a complex mission.

83. Regarding the timeliness of the submission of budgets for peacekeeping missions, it was important to have the appropriate staff on the ground early in the life of missions so that the necessary planning could be done, that was closely related to the issue of pre-mandate commitment authority.

84. **Mr. Herrera** (Mexico) said that there appeared to be a widely held view that the Security Council was infallible. He was aware that the President of the Council did not work in a void. However, there remained a very real possibility that strategic deployment stocks might be purchased for a mission that the Council ultimately decided not to approve. He was not aware of any legal basis for the proposal that the cost of unutilized stocks could be prorated among existing missions, nor was he convinced that a mission could proceed on the basis of a letter. The Secretariat had failed to address those points in a satisfactory manner. He therefore wished to receive detailed clarification in writing.

85. **The Chairman** said that the request of the representative of Mexico had been noted.

86. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller) said that, in fact, many of the special missions financed through the regular budget of the United Nations proceeded on the basis of a letter from the President of the Security Council.

87. **Ms. Wang** Xinjia (China) said that, in order to avoid confusion, the Secretariat should provide a clearer explanation to Member States.

88. **Mr. Farid** (Saudi Arabia) said that his delegation commended the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to apply results-based budgeting to the support account. It would be helpful, however, if the Department could shed some light on the inventory control system for field assets.

89. **Mr. Sheehan** (Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Peacekeeping Operations) said that enormous progress had been achieved in establishing an inventory control system using information technology, and work was proceeding on a system that could use a form of bar coding on expendable equipment used in the field, which would greatly improve accountability.

90. Information technology was key to making the system work. The entire inventory control system was currently being managed by a staff member at the P-5 level; unfortunately, the request to upgrade that post to D-1 had been rejected. Under the current circumstances, it would be difficult to attract and retain the qualified staff needed to implement such systems.

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/56/870, A/56/887/Add.1-9 and A/56/902)

Agenda item 130: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*) (A/56/903)

91. **Mr. Ahmed** (Iraq) said that his delegation welcomed the report of OIOS on the update of oversight activities concerning the oil-for-food programme and the United Nations Compensation Commission (A/56/903) as it referred to unresolved questions relating to the audit of accounts. Unfortunately, the assessment was casual and did not deal with the shortcomings and impropriety mentioned in two earlier OIOS reports (A/55/436 and A/56/381) or the observations contained in the statement made by the delegation of Iraq at the previous session.

92. His delegation did not believe that the way in which those matters had been handled could be attributed to a shortage of staff. His Government had requested the participation of an Iraqi manager in the

auditing of accounts, since it was unjust for Iraq to sustain millions of dollars in losses because of practices and violations committed by United Nations employees. It hoped that OIOS would step up its activities in connection with the oil-for-food programme and the United Nations Compensation Commission and ensure full implementation and effective monitoring of the programme, in accordance with United Nations procedures.

93. His delegation maintained the right to demand serious investigations of financial mismanagement and to view all OIOS reports related to the programme. It also supported closer coordination of oversight to prevent any repetition of violations, which aggravated the suffering of the Iraqi people, on whom unjust and unprecedented sanctions had been imposed for more than 12 years.

94. **Ms. Stern** (Director of the Internal Audit Division, Office of Internal Oversight Services) said that her Office had attempted in its report to address the queries raised by Iraq, but would hold bilateral consultations with that delegation, if required. The representative of Iraq had used the term "violations" when referring to actions of the staff of the Office of the Iraq Programme. However, OIOS would define "violations" as instances of gross misconduct or mismanagement, and if any had been found, those cases would have been transferred immediately from the Internal Audit Division to the Investigations Division. Certain weaknesses and management irregularities had been found, and recommendations had been made for correcting them. Follow-up to recommendations was taken very seriously. In fact, only two of the recommendations made to the Office of the Iraq Programme had not been acted on, which was a very high rate of implementation.

95. With regard to participation by Iraqi auditors, it would be possible to perform concurrent audits, each group following its own reporting lines. The possibility of a joint audit was something both parties might wish to pursue, and could be discussed bilaterally. The additional audit post at the United Nations Compensation Commission was welcome, but had not yet received approval from the Governing Council.

96. With regard to audits of the activities of the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, there was need for enhanced coordination among the agencies executing projects in the north of the country. Her Office had worked closely with its counterparts there, and was planning a joint horizontal audit of procurement in the near future.

97. She took note of the request of the delegation of Iraq to be kept abreast of all reports of OIOS.

98. **Mr. Ahmed** (Iraq) said that the violations he was referring to were those mentioned in the reports of the Secretary-General contained in documents A/55/436 and A/56/381. His delegation had also sent a letter to the Security Council detailing other violations, which might not have been brought to the attention of OIOS.

99. **Ms. Stern** (Director of the Internal Audit Division, Office of Internal Oversight Services) said that OIOS was not aware of the letter that had been addressed to the Security Council. As to the matters referred to in the reports of the Secretary-General, those actions were not viewed as violations but as audit irregularities, which had been addressed through recommendations. At any rate, a follow-up audit would be performed.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

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Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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02-39056 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 133: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/56/789, A/56/882, A/56/885, A/56/887, A/56/941; A/C.5/56/43)

1. **Mr. Halbwachs** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the financial performance report of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/56/882), said that the General Assembly had authorized the amount of $51.9 million gross for the period to cover the additional posts that had been recommended for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. Expenditures had amounted to $53.4 million net, resulting in additional requirements of $1.4 million net, mainly as a result of underbudgeted resources for post and staff assessment costs. The details of expenditures were set out in table 1 and in annexes 1 and 2 to the report.

2. The proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/56/885) amounted to $88.4 million net for 711 posts. The increase of $9.3 million net included the full costs for the 125 additional posts that had been approved by the General Assembly as well as for an additional medical officer and two nurses. He drew attention to the new results-based budgeting format in which the proposed budget had been presented.

3. In response to a request by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the Secretary-General had prepared a report on instances for which the United Nations was entitled to restitution as the result of non-compliance with status-of-forces or other agreements (A/56/789). A compendium would be developed of instances that had arisen during the period from January 1993 to August 2001. The methodology and criteria for establishing the compendium were described in paragraphs 3 to 5 of the report.

4. He wished to draw attention, lastly, to the progress report on the write-off of contingent-owned equipment at liquidated missions contained in document A/C.5/56/43, which summarized the progress that had been made between July 2001 and April 2002. A total of 1,326 cases had been processed during that period, with 39 cases still pending. All the cases were expected to be processed by the end of 2002.

6. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 for the support account for peacekeeping operations (A/56/941), drew attention to paragraph 6, in which the Committee recommended approval of the action proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 11 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/882). Part II of the report commented on the changed format of the support account presentation. The Advisory Committee welcomed the change and offered some suggestions for improvement. In the section beginning in paragraph 16, the Advisory Committee analysed the cost estimates proposed by the Secretary-General. On some posts, it maintained the position it had expressed in its earlier report on implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi report) (A/56/478). In paragraph 23, the Committee recommended approval of the proposed D-2 post for the Director of Management. In paragraph 30, the Committee expressed the opinion that the time had come for the Secretariat to develop a methodology and monitoring system to evaluate the results of training programmes in peacekeeping operations. In paragraph 41, the Committee recommended approval of $100.6 million gross for total staffing and non-staffing requirements.

6. In paragraph 31 of the report of the Advisory Committee on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/56/887), the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/789).

7. **Mr. Bouheddou** (Algeria) said that his delegation appreciated the Advisory Committee's explanation for the late issuance of its report, but regretted that the number of late documents had continued to rise, mostly without the required explanation.

8. The Fifth Committee must cease to be a venue for rubber-stamping the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. While his delegation highly appreciated the work of that Committee and its expert members, the

Fifth Committee should not be content to play a passive role. As a deliberative and decision-making body, the Fifth Committee should be a forum for debate on administrative and budgetary questions.

9. His delegation welcomed the presentation of the support account budget in a results-based format as an important step towards rationalizing the support account budget in the context of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the unprecedented increase in activities funded from the support account. It supported the recommendations contained in paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/56/941) and would like to hear why the Secretariat had been unable to comply with the request contained in paragraph 12.

10. His delegation continued to believe that the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was more than a simple budgetary exercise and required enhanced cooperation on the part of all the actors involved.

11. Lastly, with reference to paragraph 23 of the report, he would welcome clarification of the Advisory Committee's position regarding the two D-1 posts that had been proposed.

12. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that no other department in the Secretariat besides the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been able to increase its staffing by over 50 per cent. At a projected $102.3 million, gross resources for the support account were 71 per cent more for the period 2002-2003 than for 2000-2001. His delegation believed, therefore, that adequate resources had been provided to the Department and that it was time for it to measurably increase its productivity. The Department should be able to backstop peacekeeping activities, and the tens of millions of dollars spent on modernizing and upgrading equipment should result in savings based on efficiencies.

13. His delegation commended the Secretariat for the speedy transition to a results-based budgeting format and urged it to study and implement the useful recommendations of the Advisory Committee in that regard.

14. The increase of $12.57 million in the budget for the support account for the year ending 30 June 2002 had been attributed to the full 12-month costing of the additional 121 posts and related non-post resources approved in General Assembly resolution 56/241. That would entail all 121 posts being encumbered by the end of the coming month, yet the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/941, paragraphs 21 and 22) stated that 18 per cent of currently approved Professional posts remained unfilled. Furthermore, of the 91 additional posts that had been approved for peacekeeping, only 58 were occupied as at 27 March 2002. His delegation wished to know the distinction between "permanently" encumbered Professional posts and "temporarily" occupied posts. Additional details on the increase in the support account budget for the current period and on the need for an increase for 2002-2003 would also be useful.

15. The Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division had noted that unspent balances from the peacekeeping budget had made it possible to provide full financing for the $146 million strategic deployment stocks project without additional assessments. He trusted that similar amounts would be identified to repay the arrears due to troop-contributing countries and to tackle other pressing financial problems facing the Organization, which the Secretariat itself had identified. With political commitment, finding technical solutions should not prove difficult.

16. Regarding the Secretariat's capacity for backstopping peacekeeping activities, it was useful to note that 12 of the 13 working days of the Committee during the second part of the Assembly's resumed session would be devoted to peacekeeping. A budget of around $2.7 billion was expected to be approved during that period. On the other hand, the Committee had spent 12 weeks approving the regular budget, which amounted each year to less than half the peacekeeping budget. The Committee should consider that fact in terms of the priorities of the Organization.

17. **Mr. Ho** (Singapore) inquired whether the listing of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in the support account was related to the resident auditor functions, and if so, how many such auditors had been hired.

18. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), in reply to the representative of Algeria, agreed that the Committee should not be a rubber stamp for the Advisory Committee's decisions. In his

experience, it had never been. As a recent example, the Committee had disagreed with the Advisory Committee on the 2002-2003 budget, including on the question of the support accounts. As for the position of the Advisory Committee on the two D-1 posts, it was not recommending their approval.

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/C.5/56/L.70)

19. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal), Vice-Chairman, reporting on the informal consultations held on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said that, despite the efforts of many delegations, the consultations had not borne fruit; it had been impossible to reach consensus on a draft resolution.

20. **Mr. Pulido** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.70 on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and urged interested delegations to take part in informal consultations on the text.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.